

Exploring Aotearoa Queer History through Museum Objects

Scott Pilkington

2026

*Auckland University of Technology
School of Art & Design*

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Design (MDes).



Colophon

Typeset in Garamond.

Cover is Garamond, Garamond Swash, & Ludlow Tempo.

Created using Microsoft Word & Adobe InDesign.

Proofread by Dr Robyn Ramage, April 2026.

Published 2026 in Tamaki Makau Rau, Aotearoa.

Cover image: Exhibition detail, June 2026. Photograph: Kayla Williams.

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

28 April 2026

revised 01 September 2026

Scott Pilkington

DipILS (*OPNZ*), BA, GradDipTh, BA(Hons), PGDipArts, PGCertEd,
MA (*Auck*), PGCertSciComm (*Otago*), PGCertArts (*AUT*), FBS

Image authorship and permissions

Unless otherwise specified, all photographs are by the author. Reproduction permissions for all images of taonga were obtained from the relevant museums and, where required, from associated rights holders and community representatives.

Abstract

Queer histories in Aotearoa remain unevenly represented within museum collections and public memory, often fragmented or absent due to archival and institutional limitations. Developed during the 40th anniversary of Homosexual Law Reform, this practice-led research asks how an exhibition of creatively reinterpreted taonga from museum collections can generate new forms of engagement with Aotearoa Queer histories.

Exhibition-making as its primary method of enquiry. I selected, reproduced, and spatially arranged artefacts to explore how their meanings shift in relation to one another outside institutional display contexts. The project culminates in a realised exhibition through which these ideas are explored in practice. Drawing on Queer theory, critical museology, and visitor studies, the exhibition translates theoretical concerns into spatial and material strategies, including non-linear layout, limited didactic interpretation, and the use of reproducible and reimagined artefacts.

These strategies foreground materiality, tactility, and scale to create closer, more provisional encounters with taonga. Reproductions and reworkings enable handling, comparison, and circulation, while moments of absence and withholding draw attention to gaps in the archival record. Rather than presenting a singular narrative, the exhibition invites partial, relational, and contingent forms of engagement shaped by visitor movement, prior knowledge, and interaction.

The project finds that reproductions and interpretive restraint enable forms of tactile, relational engagement not typically possible in museum contexts, while making archival absences perceptible rather than resolved. It also shows that non-linear spatial arrangements and limited didactic framing support multiple, contingent interpretations rather than singular narratives.

In doing so, the project suggests that exhibition practice can extend engagement with Aotearoa Queer histories by foregrounding absence, enabling tactile interaction, and supporting non-linear, visitor-led interpretation. It positions exhibitions not only as sites of display, but as spaces where historical, ethical, and curatorial questions can be worked through in practice, without requiring resolution.

Acknowledgements

To all my Rainbow whānau on whose shoulders I perch precariously and without whom I would not be able to enjoy the life I have.

Thanks, from the bottom of my soul to everyone who supported, encouraged, and bolstered me in this project:

- to all my friends who saw value here and buoyed me through another thesis – particularly Nico Benavides Munoz, Dr André Brett, Kat Costelloe, Alan Curtis, Makyla Curtis, Dr Tof Eklund, Charles Grinter, A/Prof Tracy Harkison, Richard Kearney, Dr Chantal Knowles, Marilyn Kohlhase MNZM, Dr Aleisha Ward
- to my AUT colleagues (who occasionally suggested this could’ve been a PhD) – principally Kate Absolum, Angela Anderson, Dr Sue Gallagher, Lisa Brien Herd, Prof Nigel Harris, Prof-Emeritus Pare Keiha CNZM QSO, Ksenya Nefiodova, Dr Tangaroa Paora, Tyler Reynolds-Cranney, Moth Sutherland-Tupp, Kim Tairi, Dr Michelle Ladwig Williams, Magda Wisniewska, Jessica Yamamoto
- to Te Kura Taura Rangahau Graduate Research School for covering my fees & Te Kura Toi a Hoahoa School of Art & Design for a materials grant
- to my fellow students over three cohorts who listened to me more than anyone should and challenged me accordingly
- to (predominantly Queer) scholars who formed the bedrock of this thesis, many of whom I’ve not met yet – chiefly Dr Calum Bennachie, Prof Chris Brickell, Dr Will Hansen, Prof Welby Ings, Prof Joanna Kidman, Dr Rowan Light, Bill Logan, Dr Tuan Nguyen, Dr Vincent O’Malley, Dr Jock Phillips ONZM, Malaeulu Seuta’afili A/Prof Patrick Thomsen, (Dr) Sidney Wong, Rangimoana Taylor
- to all the museum kaitiaki – notably Nina Finigan, Stephanie Gibson, Jane Groufsky, Reuben Mariu, Freya Markula, Claire Regnault, Dr Roger Smith, Gareth Watkins
- to the spectacular AUT lab staff who not only gave amazing guidance & support, but periodically metaphorically picked me up off the floor as I navigated my thesis & my estranged father’s premature death – Bronte Bell, Dan Collins, Finn Godbolt, Struan Hamilton, Louise James, Andy Kinnear, Winston Shacklock, Taashi Sheers, John Tan, Greg Thomas, Fleur Williams, Kayla Williams
- to my AUT lecturers who kept up with the eternally unfair question: “*so what?*”
- to my ever patient and supportive supervisors – Drs George Hajian & Layla Tweedie-Cullen
- to my long-suffering and patient (now) husband – Bernie Lee – who has sat through the worst parts of this thesis and my health, with a hot meal & a grouchy feline at the ready
- to Georgina Beyer MNZM JP, a fellow Queer renal sufferer, who died early in this project, whose legacy gave me the necessary mettle in the face of current affairs
- to the taonga who shared their mauri with me & allowed me to share their stories
- to the rights holders and community who graciously and generously allowed me to reproduce their taonga in this project and shared with me their stories & advice.

Ngā mihi nui, Kia ora rawa atu.

Whaowhia te kete mātauranga. Whāia te mātauranga hei oranga mō koutou

Fill the basket of knowledge. Seek knowledge for the sake of your wellbeing.

Contents

Attestation of Authorship..... i

 Image authorship and permissions i

Abstract ii

Acknowledgements iii

1. Introduction and Research Questions 1

 Research questions and scope..... 1

 Background and problem space 1

 Rationale for the project and aims 1

2. Positionality and Language 2

 Reflexive statement 2

 Use of terminology 3

3. Context/knowledge..... 3

 Curatorial practice 3

 Material culture and memory..... 4

 Queer Theory, museology, and historiography..... 6

 Contemporary Queer contexts 7

4. Method and Methodology 8

 Methodological approach 8

 Exhibition-making as method..... 9

 Visitor experience and contextual theory 9

 Selection of taonga..... 10

5. Development and Documentation..... 11

 Selecting and engaging with taonga held in museum collections 11

 Making and reinterpreting artefacts..... 12

 Designing the exhibition..... 18

 Interpretive strategies and visitor agency 22

6. Analysis and Commentary on Artefact 23

 Exhibition as method..... 23

 Object-based analysis: how artefacts enact claims 23

 Material and spatial strategies..... 24

 Ephemera and temporal shifts..... 25

 Visitor agency and constructed narratives 26

 Ethical and curatorial implications 26

7. Reflections and implications 27

 What the exhibition demonstrates..... 27

 Emergent insights and surprises..... 28

 Tensions and limitations 29

 Positionality, labour, and limits of practice 30

 Research questions in practice..... 31

8. Conclusion and Future Directions 32

References cited..... 34

Appendix 1: List of artefacts created 44

Appendix 2: List of taonga referenced 55

Appendix 3: Summary of taonga data 62

Appendix 4: Exhibition & Postscript..... 63

 Exhibitions as Negotiated Spaces 64

 Exhibitions as Temporary 72

List of Tables

Table 1: Distribution of selected taonga across thematic groupings and time periods62

Table 2: Distribution of taonga by object type across thematic groupings.....62

Table 3: Institutional sources of taonga included in the project.....62

Table 4: Summary of artefact production methods.....62

List of Figures

Figure 1: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Kayla Williams.cover

Figure 2: Henry Winkelmann (Circa 1900). Swapping Spit. Auckland War Memorial
Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-1971-6-1.....viii

Figure 3: Shortlisted taonga printed at A4 scale and displayed publicly (2024).12

Figure 4: Customised Police Helmet: original taonga (Te Papa: GH017761) and
recreated artefact.13

Figure 5: Detail of Camp Mother and Camp Leader sampled (embroidery).14

Figure 6: Detail of The Creation of Golden Goddess (booklet).....14

Figure 7: Detail of Louisa Wall’s Jacket (booklet).14

Figure 8: Detail of Military Leisure [Photo album].15

Figure 9: Detail of Krazy Knights v Rainbow Heroes autograph album.15

Figure 10: Painted placards (above) and the 1974 Photograph used as reference (right).
Ref: Alexander Turnbull Library: 23041778.16

Figure 11: Detail of This Object Has Been Removed from Display.17

Figure 12: Detail of At least here we can be community (flyers).17

Figure 13: Early exhibition design experiments.18

Figure 14: An exhibition design based on kaitiaki space.20

Figure 15: An exhibition design based on domestic furniture and visitor flow.21

Figure 16: Testing of the final design, a simpler version of the design in Figure 14.21

Figure 17: Screenshots from Te Papa Collections Online showing search results for
different Queer topics. (April 2026).....22

Figure 18: Portraits of Carmen Rupe and Chrissy Witoko. Te Papa.27

Figure 19: Cyanotype booklet (tunnel-book structure) depicting the author
and his husband.43

Figure 20: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.63

Figure 21: Window display at night. Photograph: Paul Chapman.64

Figure 22: Window display at night. Photograph: Paul Chapman.65

Figure 23: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.....66

Figure 24: Updated artefact: This object is not available for display. (June 2026).....68

Figure 25: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.....69

Figure 26: Lisa Jurakovich with You Won't Believe What We Wear to Bed poster.
June 2026.70

Figure 27: Exhibition detail including You Won't Believe What We Wear to Bed poster. ..70

Figure 28: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.....71

Figure 29: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.....72

Figure 30: Empty gallery, 6 June 2026.73

Figure 31: MDes 2026 class building community, June 2026.73

Figure 32: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.....74

Figure 33: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Kayla Williams.....75

Figure 34: Author & exhibition. Photograph: Kayla Williams.....76



Figure 2: Henry Winkelmann (Circa 1900). Swapping Spit. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-1971-6-1.

1. Introduction and Research Questions

Research questions and scope

This project investigates how an exhibition of creatively reinterpreted museum taonga can offer new ways of engaging with and understanding Aotearoa Queer histories. I explore two supporting questions: how curatorial and design strategies shape these engagements, and how the exhibition can surface and respond to gaps or silences in the museum record of Queer histories.

Background and problem space

Queer histories in Aotearoa remain unevenly represented within public narratives, museum collections, and broader social memory. Many stories are dispersed, fragmented, or absent: archival records are incomplete, coded, or silent, and Queer significance is rarely made explicit.¹ Generational gaps intensify this loss. Unlike other cultural groups where intergenerational knowledge may be passed directly through whānau, many Rainbow Communities rely on later-life community engagement to access their own histories. This creates vulnerabilities in collective memory and risks the disappearance of narratives before they are shared or recorded.

Histories of marginalised communities in Aotearoa – whether Indigenous, feminist, migrant, or Queer – have long been shaped by selective remembering, political contestation, and social erasure. Even when material evidence survives, it is often framed through institutional cataloguing systems that obscure or neutralise non-normative identities.² These gaps reveal the limits of relying on institutional archives alone to tell full and complex Queer histories.

This project coincides with the 40th anniversary of Homosexual Law Reform in Aotearoa and situates the research within a recent historical frame. The research also coincides with an increased interest in local history, particularly considering “difficult” and “inconvenient” histories.³

Rationale for the project and aims

This project aims to do three things: explore what cultural material is in museum collections that can tell us things about

¹ Scott McKinnon, Andrew Gorman-Murray, and Dale Dominey-Howes, “Remembering an epidemic during a disaster: memories of HIV/AIDS, gay male identities and the experience of recent disasters in Australia and New Zealand,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 24, no. 1 (2017); “Your life is important – your archive is important,” Te Papa’s Blog, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2025, accessed 19 June, 2025, https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2025/06/19/your-life-is-important-your-archive-is-important/?mc_cid=38dac9386d&mc_cid=30792278af.

² Adrien Johnnie McCrory, “Queer stories... and queer silences,” *History Australia* 19, no. 3 (2022); Dan Vo, “The Compassionate Way: Towards Trans and Non-Binary Inclusive Narratives in Museums,” *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 14, no. 1-2 (2020); Joanna Kidman et al., “‘Native time’ in the white city: indigenous youth temporalities in settler-colonial space,” *Children’s Geographies* 19, no. 1 (2021); Jeffrey Weeks, “Queer(y)ing the ‘Modern Homosexual,’” *Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 3 (2012).

³ Joanna Kidman et al., *Fragments from a Contested Past: Remembrance, Denial and New Zealand History*, (Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books, 2022); Liana MacDonald and Joanna Kidman, “Uncanny pedagogies: teaching difficult histories at sites of colonial violence,” *Critical Studies in Education* 63, no. 1 (2022); Vincent O’Malley and Joanna Kidman, “Settler colonial history, commemoration and white backlash: remembering the New Zealand Wars,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 3 (2018); Rowan Light, *Why Memory Matters: ‘Remembered Histories’ and the Politics of the Shared Past*, (Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books, 2023); Rowan Light and Nigel Borell, *Atarau: Stories of the New Zealand Wars* (Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum, 2025).

Queer history, develop an exhibition as a vehicle to investigate ways of conveying that material, and attempt to find new ways of engaging people in, and promote understanding of, Aotearoa Queer history. I am developing this practice-led research in response to gaps and silences in museum representations of Queer histories in Aotearoa. I will use material culture as a method to reconnect visitors with narratives that are overlooked, dispersed, or only partially documented.

2. Positionality and Language

Reflexive statement

I am a cisgender bisexual male and Tangata Tiriti (Pākehā of Scottish, English, and German ancestry). I came to this project through my own experience within Rainbow Communities and my interest in how Queer histories are encountered in museums. This project reflects my desire to create forms of engagement that feel more immediate, relational, and materially grounded.

My perspective is shaped by academic training in anthropology, history, and museum studies, as well as practical experience in heritage crafts such as textiles and letterpress printmaking. These inform how I approach making within the exhibition. Although I have worked and studied in museum contexts, I am not a GLAM professional; I approach exhibition-making from a design-led, practice-based position. I conduct this research within a Western university and recognise its location within ongoing colonial systems of knowledge production.⁴

I draw on my lived experience within Rainbow Communities to guide my practice. I treat this perspective as partial rather than representative. I use peer feedback and reflective writing to test my assumptions, but I do not attempt to eliminate subjectivity. Instead, I position myself as a facilitator who creates conditions for interpretation rather than as an authoritative narrator. This project presents one account among many possible Queer histories.⁵

I also navigated the emotional demands of this research alongside personal chronic illness, bereavement, and moments of joy. These experiences shaped the pace and scope of the project. I relied on reflective practice, supervisory guidance, and informal consultation to support ethical decision-making.

⁴ Avery Smith, Hine Funaki, and Liana MacDonald, “Living, breathing settler-colonialism: the reification of settler norms in a common university space,” *Higher Education Research & Development* 40, no. 1 (2021); Joanna Kidman and Cherie Chu, “Scholar Outsiders in the Neoliberal University: Transgressive Academic Labour in the Whitestream,” *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 52, no. 1 (2017); David Mayeda et al., “Colonial Disparities in Higher Education: Explaining Racial Inequality for Māori Youth in Aotearoa New Zealand,” *Social Policy and Society* 21, no. 1 (2022); Tara G McAllister et al., “Why isn’t my professor Māori? A snapshot of the academic workforce in New Zealand universities,” *MAL Journal* 8 (2019); Marcia Leenen-Young et al., “Pillars of the colonial institution are like a knowledge prison: the significance of decolonizing knowledge and pedagogical practice for Pacific early career academics in higher education,” *Teaching in Higher Education* 26, no. 7-8 (2021); Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti et al., “Mapping interpretations of decolonization in the context of higher education,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 4, no. 1 (2015).

⁵ Following Jock Phillips, *A History of New Zealand in 100 Objects* (New Zealand: Penguin Random House, 2022); Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 2nd ed. (Dunedin, NZ: Otago University Press, 2012).

Use of terminology

I use “Queer” and “Rainbow Communities” as inclusive umbrella terms for a wide range of sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.⁶ I capitalise these terms to centre the communities and scholarship they reference. I recognise that these terms are culturally and temporally specific, reflecting a contemporary, largely Anglophone settler framework. They do not fully encompass Takatāpui, MVPFAFF, or other Indigenous and diasporic frameworks, which operate through distinct cultural logics.⁷

I use the term “taonga” in its broader museum sense to refer to objects of cultural or personal significance. I acknowledge its specific meaning within Te Ao Māori and follow scholarship that recognises museum-held objects as carrying relational significance and mana across contexts,⁸ while also raising questions about how such terms shift and are recontextualised within institutional settings.

3. Context/knowledge

Curatorial practice

Curators shape how objects are framed, which narratives are foregrounded, and how audiences encounter and interpret material culture. These decisions are inherently situated – inflected by a curator’s positionality, institutional contexts, and the wider social histories that inform both objects and their meanings.

I explore curatorial practice as the conceptual foundation for working with taonga to acknowledge their layered and sometimes obscured histories while creating opportunities for engaging with Aotearoa’s Queer pasts. This framework guides how taonga are selected, reinterpreted, and situated within the exhibition, shaping the conditions through which visitors encounter them and form their own readings.

Design practice functions alongside curation as the mechanism through which interpretation becomes experiential. Through spatial layout, material choices, lighting, interactivity, and tone, design shapes how visitors feel, move, and make (and add) meaning. In this project, design translates curatorial propositions into embodied encounters, positioning reinterpreted taonga as points of emotional and intellectual engagement.

⁶ Kelly L. Reddy-Best and Elaine L. Pedersen, “The relationship of gender expression, sexual identity, distress, appearance, and clothing choices for queer women,” *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education* 8, no. 1 (2015); Scott Pilkington and Tof Eklund, “Can Universities Be Considered Queer Institutions?,” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025).

⁷ Patrick Thomsen and Phylesha Brown-Acton, “Manalagi Talanoa A Community-Centred Approach to Research on the Health and Wellbeing of Pacific Rainbow LGBTQA+ MVPFAFF Communities in Aotearoa New Zealand,” *Pacific Health Dialog* 21, no. 7 (2021); Logan Hamley et al., “‘You’re the One That Was on Uncle’s Wall’: Identity, Whanaungatanga and Connection for Takatāpui (LGBTQ+ Māori),” *Genealogy* 5, no. 2 (2021); Elizabeth Kerekere, “Part of The Whānau: The Emergence of Takatāpui Identity - He Whāriki Takatāpui” (PhD thesis Victoria University of Wellington, 2017); Molly McLennan, “From Victimization to Post-Structuralism: Understanding Changes in Historical Analysis of Gender in Aotearoa 1977 - 2008,” *Historia!* 18 (2021).

⁸ Migoto Eria, “The mana of taonga and what it means for museums in Aotearoa,” Te Papa Blog, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, 2018, <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2018/09/12/the-mana-of-taonga-and-what-it-means-for-museums-in-aotearoa/>; Scott Ratima Nolan, “Kaitiakitanga: Utilising Māori Holistic Conservation in Heritage Institutions,” *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies* 20, no. 1 (2022); Puawai Cairns, “Decolonise or indigenise: moving towards sovereign spaces and the Māorification of New Zealand museology,” Te Papa Blog, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, 10 Feb 2023, 2020, <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2020/02/10/decolonise-or-indigenise-moving-towards-sovereign-spaces-and-the-maorification-of-new-zealand-museology/>.

My curatorial stance emphasises visitor-led meaning-making and resists authoritative narration. This approach is informed by uneven museum collecting histories, in which Takatāpui, Pasifika Queer, intersex, bisexual, transgender, and migrant communities remain significantly underrepresented in collections.⁹ Rather than attempting to correct these gaps artificially, the exhibition treats absence as part of the interpretive field, shaping what can be encountered and how histories are understood.

My prior research into pop-up museums in Aotearoa informs my use of reproduction-based display strategies. In that research, I identified reproduction as supporting access, portability, and responsiveness to local contexts.¹⁰ I apply these strategies here by prioritising lightweight, reproducible artefacts that can be handled, rearranged, and potentially reinstalled beyond a single site, enabling forms of engagement not typically available in institutional settings.

This exhibition is also shaped by insights from visitor studies. Stephen Bitgood’s work on museum fatigue and Beverly Serrell’s research on selective attention demonstrate that most visitors spend only brief periods engaging with exhibits. In response, I design for encounters that can occur within 10–20 minutes, using a restrained text-to-object ratio. These decisions recognise museums as sites of leisure as much as learning.¹¹

Finally, the exhibition is inspired by Jock Phillips’ *A History of New Zealand in 100 Objects*,¹² particularly his use of object-centred storytelling to illuminate broader social histories. Here, that approach is extended through reinterpretation, allowing existing museum collections to be read differently and to suggest histories that are not always visible within institutional frames.

Material culture and memory

Material culture – objects created, used, valued, or preserved by people – serves as a vital means of engaging with both the past and present. Objects carry emotional, symbolic, and cultural meaning; they operate as mnemonic devices that anchor memory and experience.¹³ In museum settings, these meanings are shaped by curatorial framing, institutional priorities, and visitor interpretation. No object is neutral.¹⁴ Meaning emerges through how objects are framed and encountered.

For Queer histories, material culture plays an especially significant role. Archives of Queer life in Aotearoa are fragmented, coded, or

⁹ “Queer history research guide,” National Library Blog, National Library, 2017, accessed 27 June, 2025, <https://natlib.govt.nz/blog/tagged/598/queer-history>.

¹⁰ Scott Pilkington, “Communicating science in Aotearoa New Zealand museums: A pop-up medical exhibition case study” (MA thesis University of Auckland, 2020).

¹¹ Jan Packer, “Beyond Learning: Exploring Visitors’ Perceptions of the Value and Benefits of Museum Experiences,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 51, no. 1 (2008); Carmen Antón, Carmen Camarero, and María-José Garrido, “A journey through the museum: Visit factors that prevent or further visitor satiation,” *Annals of Tourism Research* 73 (2018): 48-50; Graham Black, “Remember the 70%: sustaining ‘core’ museum audiences,” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 31, no. 4 (2016): 9-10; Stephen Bitgood, “An analysis of visitor circulation: Movement patterns and the general value principle,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 49, no. 4 (2006); Stephen Bitgood and Stephany Dukes, “Not another step! Economy of movement and pedestrian choice point behavior in shopping malls,” *Environment and behavior* 38, no. 3 (2006); Stephen Bitgood, “Museum Fatigue: A Critical Review,” *Visitor Studies* 12, no. 2 (2009); Stephen Bitgood, “An attention-value model of museum visitors,” *Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education*: Washington, DC, USA (2010); Stephen Bitgood, *Attention and Value: Keys to Understanding Museum Visitors* (Walnut Creek, United States: Routledge, 2013); Beverly Serrell, “The Question of Visitor Styles,” *Visitor Studies: Theory, research, and practice* (1996); Beverly Serrell, “Paying Attention: The Duration and Allocation of Visitors’ Time in Museum Exhibitions,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 40, no. 2 (1997); Beverly Serrell, *Paying Attention: Visitors and Museum Exhibitions*, ed. Roxana Adams, Professional Practice Series, (Washington DC: American Association of Museums, 1998); Beverly Serrell, “Paying more attention to paying attention,” Center for Advancement

silent, shaped by generations of criminalisation, stigma, and social erasure. Even when objects connected to Queer lives exist, their Queer significance may not be explicit in institutional records, and historical documentation often suppresses or sanitises non-normative identities.¹⁵ Material culture thus becomes a critical site for activating memory where textual records are incomplete.

Memory can also be invoked through absence, dispersal, or symbolic resonance. Scholars such as Chris Brickell and Elizabeth Kerekere have shown that Aotearoa’s public memory of Queer histories often diverges sharply from archival realities.¹⁶ Aotearoa’s historical discourse increasingly grapples with contested histories and collective forgetting.¹⁷ This is particularly evident in the silencing of colonial violence, Māori dispossession, and feminist struggles. These same dynamics affect Rainbow Communities, where archival gaps and social stigma have suppressed or erased Queer identities. Contestation and discomfort remain visible – seen, for instance, in the public backlash to Welby Ings’ film *Sparrow* (2016),¹⁸ which highlighted resistance to Queer presence within national narratives. These tensions underscore why working with taonga matters: objects can help to affirm the existence of lives otherwise erased. In this way, absence and ambiguity become not limitations but conditions that shape how the exhibition engages with gaps in the museum record.

Contemporary museum collecting tends to prioritise protest material – placards, badges, posters – acquired retrospectively, often after movements gain mainstream recognition.¹⁹ This narrow focus risks overrepresenting certain narratives (particularly white, urban, cis-male activism) and underrepresenting others. As scholars such as Bronwyn Lichtenstein note, such biases can inadvertently reinforce existing hierarchies within Queer histories.²⁰ The ephemeral, improvised, and anonymous nature of protest objects further complicates efforts to build representative collections. These conditions shape what can be encountered in museum collections, and whose histories remain difficult to access.

By resisting linear historiography focused on “great figures,” the project aligns with approaches that value multiplicity, contradiction, and contested memory. This mirrors Indigenous epistemologies that recognise the value of silence, relationality, and partiality.²¹ The exhibition does not seek to resolve historical gaps but to hold space for their complexity to be encountered. Together, these perspectives frame how the exhibition engages

of Informal Science Education (2010); Beverly Serrell, “The Aggregation of Tracking-and-Timing Visitor-Use Data of Museum Exhibitions for Benchmarks of “Thorough Use,” *Visitor Studies* 23, no. 1 (2020).

¹² Phillips, *A History of New Zealand in 100 Objects*.

¹³ Yannis Hamilakis, “Re-collecting the fragments: Archaeology as mnemonic practice,” in *Material Mnemonics: Everyday Memory in Prehistoric Europe*, ed. Katina T Lillios and Vasileios Tsamis (Oxbow Books, 2010); Taryn Bell and Penny Spikins, “The object of my affection: attachment security and material culture,” *Time and Mind* 11, no. 1 (2018); Pratishtha Bhattacharyya and Rabindra Kumar Pradhan, “Cherishing: Developing a measurement for objects of cherishing,” *Current Psychology* 42, no. 9 (2023),.

¹⁴ Kaisa Ilmonen and Tuula Juvonen, “Queer Traditions: Politics of Remembering,” *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 8, no. 1-2 (2014).

¹⁵ Joanna Kidman, “Pedagogies of Forgetting: Colonial Encounters and Nationhood at New Zealand’s National Museum,” in *Teaching and Learning Difficult Histories in International Contexts*, ed. Terrie Epstein and Carla Peck (New York, USA: Routledge, 2017), 96-97.

¹⁶ Chris Brickell, “Queer Lives in State Archives” (Keith Sinclair Lecture, Auckland, NZ, University of Auckland, 2022); Elizabeth Kerekere, “LGBT Activism among Māori,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, ed. Nancy A Naples et al. (2016).

¹⁷ See in particular: Kidman et al., *Fragments from a Contested Past: Remembrance, Denial and New Zealand History*; Kidman, “Pedagogies of Forgetting: Colonial Encounters and Nationhood at New Zealand’s National Museum,” 96; Light, *Why Memory Matters: ‘Remembered Histories’ and the Politics of the Shared Past*.

with Queer histories through material culture, particularly in relation to absence, interpretation, and visitor encounter.

Queer Theory, museology, and historiography

Museums in Aotearoa emerged from European colonial traditions that classified, displayed, and interpreted the world through Western epistemologies. Early museums, modelled on neoclassical “temples of knowledge,” reinforced narratives of national identity that marginalised or erased Indigenous and Queer lives.²² While museums today aspire to greater inclusivity, institutional legacies continue to shape how histories are collected, catalogued, and displayed.

Museums and archives are not passive repositories but active systems that shape cultural memory through selection, categorisation, and interpretation. Their classificatory structures – often formed within colonial and heteronormative contexts – have historically rendered many Queer lives illegible or unrecorded.²³ Even when Queer taonga exist in collections, they are frequently described through outdated or sanitised language; the absence of explicit Queer signposting reinforces heterosexuality as the institutional default and shapes how such histories can be encountered.²⁴

A Queer approach offers a way of working against these constraints. Rather than relying on fixed taxonomies or linear chronologies, it emphasises multiplicity, contradiction, and relational meaning-making. Within museum contexts, this shifts attention from what objects are taken to represent toward how meanings emerge through context, interpretation, and encounter.

Queer Theory provides a conceptual framework for unsettling these legacies. Scholars such as Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and José Esteban Muñoz critique fixed categories and normative structures, emphasising fluidity, multiplicity, and refusal.²⁵ Applied to museums, these perspectives suggest not simply adding Queer content to existing frameworks, but reconsidering how objects, narratives, and authority are constructed and maintained.

Queer museology extends these ideas into curatorial practice. It raises questions about how authority is distributed, how objects are interpreted, and how visitors participate in meaning-making. In this context, objects are not treated as inherently Queer; their significance emerges through stories, uses, relationships, and modes of display.²⁶ Jo Darbyshire’s *The Gay Museum* (2003)²⁷

¹⁸ Welby Ings, “Sparrow,” (New Zealand, 2016); Welby Ings, “Into the light: Sexuality, erasure and recollection,” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 4, no. 1 (2019).

¹⁹ Gemma Almond, “Why the anonymous and everyday objects are important: using the Science Museum’s collections to re-write the history of vision aids,” *Science Museum Group Journal* Spring (2020); Bell and Spikins, “The object of my affection: attachment security and material culture.”; Red Chidgey and Joanne Garde-Hansen, *Museums, Archives and Protest Memory* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2024).

²⁰ Bronwen Lichtenstein, “The iconography of Eve: Epidemiologic discourse in New Zealand’s response to HIV/AIDS” (PhD thesis University of Canterbury, 1996), 221-26.

²¹ Peter Derksen, “Where is the Queer? A case study of LGBTQ representation in Aotearoa New Zealand exhibitions” (MMHS dissertation Victoria University of Wellington, 2018); Nikki Sullivan and Craig Middleton, “Queer/ing museological technologies of display,” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 4, no. 1 (2019); Claudia Bell, “My Grandmother had one of those!,” in *Inventing New Zealand - everyday myths of pakeha identity*, ed. Claudia Bell (Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books, 1996); Claudia Bell, “Pakeha Identity and Material Culture,” in *Being Cultural*, ed. Bruce M Z Cohen (Auckland, NZ: Pearson, 2012); Claudia Bell and Lindsay Neill, “‘Think of New Zealand as a small town’: methodological and ethical issues in researching everyday culture,” *Critical Arts* 30, no. 1 (2016).

²² Conal McCarthy, “From histories of museums to museum history: approaches to historicising colonial museums in Aotearoa New Zealand,” *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020); David Gaimster, “Fitting the colonial museum dashboard? Civic action, curatorial agency and identity building at the Auckland Museum (1852–1929),”

demonstrates how reinterpretation can reveal new meanings in objects not originally associated with Rainbow Communities.²⁸ While such approaches carry risks of anachronism, they also foreground the constructed nature of meaning and open space for critical and affective engagement.

Aotearoa’s Queer historiography is strongest from the 1970s onward – particularly around activism, HIV/AIDS, and law reform – yet substantial silences remain, especially regarding trans, gender-diverse, migrant, and pre-20th-century histories. These gaps reflect archival biases and the fragility of records shaped by fear, criminalisation, or social exclusion, shaping both what is available to be told and how it can be interpreted.

Rather than attempting to resolve these silences, this project works with them. It approaches absence as part of the conditions through which Queer histories are encountered, foregrounding partiality and uncertainty. In doing so, it draws on values often associated with Indigenous methodologies – including respect, relationality, and care – while recognising the limits of my position as a Pākehā researcher. The project therefore maintains a commitment to mana-enhancing curatorial practice and to forms of interpretation that remain open rather than definitive.

Contemporary Queer contexts

Understanding contemporary Queer life in Aotearoa situates how this exhibition might be encountered and interpreted. Although significant legal reforms have been achieved – marriage equality, anti-discrimination protections, and improved gender recognition processes – Queer people continue to face social hostility, political backlash, and institutional inequity.²⁹ Quentin Allan’s research on homonegativity demonstrates that these pressures shape lived experiences across the lifespan.³⁰ These conditions inform not only what is represented, but how such representations may be read by different audiences.

Younger adults increasingly come out in adolescence, making access to historical knowledge an important resource for identity formation, connection, and resilience.³¹ Conversely, older adults hold memories of eras of criminalisation, pathologisation, and epidemic loss. This exhibition can bring these audiences together, offering intergenerational space for shared reflection and dialogue, where different relationships to Queer histories shape how the exhibition is encountered. Recent public initiatives,

Museum History Journal 13, no. 1 (2020); Simon Ville, “Researching the natural history trade of the nineteenth century,” *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020); Tony Ballantyne, “Collecting, colonisation and civic culture in southern New Zealand,” *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020).

²³ Elliot Freeman, “Defying description: searching for queer history in institutional archives,” *Archival Science* 23, no. 3 (2023).

²⁴ Nikki Sullivan and Craig Middleton, “Warning! Heteronormativity: A Question of Ethics,” in *Museums, Sexuality, and Gender Activism*, ed. Joshua Adair and Amy K Levin (London, UK: Routledge, 2020); Tuan Nguyen, “Mediating queer controversy in Australian museum exhibitions,” *Historic Environment* 28, no. 3 (2016); Tuan Nguyen, “Queering Australian Museums: Management, Collections, Exhibitions, and Connections” (PhD thesis University of Sydney, 2018), 28-30; Tom Furber, “Straight from the Archives: Reflections about Professional Engagement with LGBTQ+ Lives,” *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 14, no. 1-2 (2020); Alison S Day, “A Holistic Exploration of the Collecting and Connecting Experiences of LGBTQ+ Communities, Their Independent Archives and the GLAMU Sector in New Zealand,” *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* 72, no. 3 (2023); Alison S Day, “Seize the Initiative: In-Process LGBTQ+ Research Findings and Their Impact on Connecting Practices in New Zealand GLAMU Institutions,” *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 60, no. 1 (2023); Freeman, “Defying description: searching for queer history in institutional archives.”; Abigail Hollingsworth, “The role the LGBTQ+ Community Plays in Preserving Their Own History: The Rise of LGBTQIA+ Grassroots Archives,” *SLIS Connecting* 11, no. 2 (2023).

²⁵ Annalise Gardella, “Visibility, violence and queerness: Examining

such as petitions advocating for expanded teaching of Aotearoa histories, also suggest that younger audiences are actively seeking greater engagement with the past.³²

Intersectionality remains essential. Queer lives in Aotearoa are shaped by the interwoven dynamics of race, indigeneity, gender diversity, class, migration, and regional difference – dimensions that remain underrepresented in museum collections. While these structural exclusions cannot be fully addressed within a single exhibition, it acknowledges them explicitly and it instead creates conditions for multiple interpretations to emerge, rather than resolving these differences into a single narrative. This shapes both what can be represented and how visitors may engage with what remains absent or partial.

4. Method and Methodology

Methodological approach

This project uses exhibition-making as a method of inquiry, where knowledge is generated through the design, arrangement, and testing of objects in space.³³ Rather than treating the exhibition as a final output, the process of selecting, reproducing, and positioning taonga becomes a way of investigating how meaning is produced through display, encounter, and context.

Within this framework, making functions as a form of analysis rather than illustration. Artefacts – textiles, prints, photographs, and reconstructions – act as experimental devices to test how objects communicate and what histories they activate, addressing questions, materially by adjusting scale, texture, colour, and arrangement.

I draw on Queer Theory, critical museology, and visitor studies, translated into exhibition strategies.³⁴ The exhibition is structured without a fixed sequence, allowing visitors to construct their own pathways, while didactic text is minimised to prioritise encounter over instruction. These strategies extend Queer methodological commitments to multiplicity and refusal into spatial practice, but they also reduce curatorial control over interpretation, placing greater responsibility on visitors to construct meaning. The approach departs from object-centred exhibition models that prioritise preservation and fixed interpretation, instead treating meaning as contingent and emergent through encounter.

the potentiality of photographs,” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 6, no. 1 (2021); Catherine Hoad and Rachael Gunn, “Queer Contexts in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand,” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 4, no. 1 (2019); Natasha Bissonauth, “The Future of Museological Display: Chitra Ganesh’s Speculative Encounters,” in *Museums, Sexuality, and Gender Activism*, ed. Joshua Adair and Amy K Levin (London, UK: Routledge, 2020); Grayson Dirk, “Do It Off Broadway: Exploring the Politics of Diversity and Inclusion in Museums Through Risk, Advocacy, and Queer Experience” (MA thesis University of Washington, 2018); Margaret Middleton, “The Queer-Inclusive Museum,” *Journal Exhibition* 36, no. 2 (2017).

²⁶ Eleanor S Armstrong, “Towards queer tours in science and technology museums,” *Museum and Society* 20, no. 2 (2022); Chris Brickell, “What makes a queer object? With Chris Brickell,” (Wellington, NZ: Te Papa, 2020). <https://youtu.be/FyqcGTc7dD0>; Chris Brickell and Judith Collard, eds., *Queer objects* (Dunedin, NZ: Otago University Press, 2019).

²⁷ Jo Darbyshire, “Restlessness of meaning: an exploration of how visual artists are working with museum collections” (MCA exegesis Curtin University of Technology, 2003); Jo Darbyshire, *The Gay Museum: An exhibition exploring the history of lesbian and gay presence in Western Australia* [exhibition catalogue] (Perth, Australia, 2003).

²⁸ Nguyen, “Queering Australian Museums: Management, Collections, Exhibitions, and Connections.”; Robert Mills, “Theorizing the Queer Museum,” *Museums & Social Issues* 3, no. 1 (2008); Caroline Riley, “LGBTQ+ Representation in Museums” (MA thesis Purchase College, 2020); Nikki Sullivan et al., “Bi-focals, beards and butches: queering history in museums,” *History Australia* 19, no. 3 (2022).

²⁹ Chris Brickell, *Mates & Lovers: A history of gay New Zealand* (Auckland,

Exhibition-making as method

By producing reproductions and recreated artefacts, I test what happens when taonga are encountered outside institutional frames, where their meanings become less fixed but also less anchored in established authority. These surrogates operate as methodological “thinking objects”, rearranged, scaled, and placed in varying proximities to test how meaning shifts through context.

Practical constraints, including limited access to fragile material across multiple institutions, led to the use of surrogates. Reproductions allow handling, portability, and reconfiguration, enabling forms of engagement that original objects typically restrict. However, this shift introduces a trade-off: it removes the material authority and provenance of original taonga, raising questions about how authenticity shapes interpretation, and how authority is negotiated in the absence of original material.

Designing for handling, comparison, and non-linear movement allows different relationships between objects to emerge. Spatial arrangement, material choices, and interpretive restraint shape these encounters, while the use of surrogates and partial reconstructions makes gaps in museum collections perceptible without resolving them, positioning absence as a methodological condition rather than a curatorial problem to be corrected.

Visitor experience and contextual theory

The exhibition is designed for brief, selective, and non-linear engagement, informed by research on museum fatigue and visitor attention.³⁵ This approach draws on the Contextual Model of Learning (Contextual Theory), which understands visitor experience as shaped by the interaction of personal, sociocultural, and physical contexts.³⁶ This is realised through limited label length, reduced text-to-object ratios, and prioritised visual and tactile engagement, with an expected engagement time of 10–20 minutes. This design treats visitor behaviour not as a constraint to be corrected, but as a methodological condition that shapes how knowledge is produced in the exhibition.

The approach assumes that visitors bring different personal and cultural knowledge, reflecting the personal and sociocultural dimensions identified previously. The exhibition allows for this variability rather than standardise interpretation. I provide shallow entry points through accessible materials and familiar

NZ: Random House, 2008); Craig Murdoch, “Editorial: “Be better than what’s out there,”” *Rangahau Aranga: AUT Graduate Review* 2, no. 2 (2023); Welby Ings, “Ensuring the Family Home: The Responsibilities of Queer Scholarship,” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025); Robert Sewell, Ti Lamusse, and Fiona Hutton, “Cisheteronormativity and the Court: A Queer Criminological Approach,” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025); Ti Lamusse, Emmy Raketc, and Will Hansen, “Combat Safetyism,” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025).

³⁰ Quentin Allan, “Gay men coming out later in life: A hermeneutic analysis of acknowledging sexual orientation to oneself,” *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology* 24 (2024): 1; Quentin Allan, “What Homophobic Thinking Looks Like: Insights from New Zealand’s Homosexual Law Reform Debates of the Late 20th Century,” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025).

³¹ Allan, “Gay men coming out later in life: A hermeneutic analysis of acknowledging sexual orientation to oneself,” 6.

³² Kidman et al., *Fragments from a Contested Past: Remembrance, Denial and New Zealand History*; O’Malley and Kidman, “Settler colonial history, commemoration and white backlash: remembering the New Zealand Wars.”; Light, *Why Memory Matters: ‘Remembered Histories’ and the Politics of the Shared Past*; Light and Borell, *Atarau: Stories of the New Zealand Wars*.

³³ Christopher Frayling, “Research in art and design,” *Royal College of Art Research Papers* 1, no. 1 (1993/1994); Christopher Frayling, “...to know the place for the first time...” in *The Artist and Academia*, ed. Helen Phelan and Graham F. Welch (London: Routledge, 2021).

³⁴ Mills, “Theorizing the Queer Museum.”; J. Michael Ryan, “Queer Theory,” in *Companion to Sexuality Studies*, ed. Nancy A Naples (2020); Stuti Das, “Queer Methodologies and Social

formats, while allowing deeper engagement through comparison, movement, and optional interpretive materials.

Rather than directing visitors toward a single meaning, the exhibition positions interpretation as emerging through movement, handling, and prior knowledge. This approach allows for diverse forms of engagement, but may also produce uneven or partial understandings, revealing a tension between personalised meaning-making and shared interpretive grounding.

Selection of taonga

Selection operates as a methodological filter rather than a neutral gathering process. Selection criteria include:

- relevance to Queer histories, whether explicit or inferred
- ability to be meaningfully reproduced or reinterpreted
- sensitivity to cultural context and the mana of taonga
- diversity of time, geography, community, and material form
- acknowledgement of gaps, particularly around Takatāpui, Pasifika Queer, asexual, intersex, migrant, and transgender experiences

These criteria are applied iteratively, with selection refined as objects are tested in relation to one another. This allows relationships between objects to shape selection, but also means some histories remain excluded when they cannot be materially or contextually integrated, demonstrating how curatorial and material constraints actively shape the contours of Queer historiography within the exhibition.

Gaps in the institutional record become part of the selection process. When I cannot locate or access certain histories, I do not replace them with substitutes; instead, I design the exhibition to make these absences visible through omission, fragmentation, and partial reconstruction, positioning absence as an active condition of the archive.

Science,” in *Companion to Sexuality Studies*, ed. Nancy A Naples (2020).

³⁵ Beverly Serrell, “Are They Watching? Visitors and Videos in Exhibitions,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 45, no. 1 (2002); Serrell, “The Aggregation of Tracking-and-Timing Visitor-Use Data of Museum Exhibitions for Benchmarks of “Thorough Use.”; Stephen Bitgood, “When Is “Museum Fatigue” Not Fatigue?,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 52, no. 2 (2009); Gareth Davey, “What is Museum Fatigue?,” *Visitor Studies Today* 8, no. 3 (2005); Benjamin Ives Gilman, “Museum Fatigue,” *The Scientific Monthly* 2, no. 1 (1916); Jan Packer and Nigel Bond, “Museums as Restorative Environments,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 53, no. 4 (2010).

³⁶ John Falk and Lynn D Dierking, “The Contextual Model of Learning (2000),” in *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, ed. Gail Anderson (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2004); John H Falk and Martin Storksdieck, “Using the contextual model of learning to understand visitor learning from a science center exhibition,” *Science Education* 89, no. 5 (2005); John H. Falk, “Contextualizing Falk’s Identity-Related Visitor Motivation Model,” *Visitor Studies* 14, no. 2 (2011).

5. Development and Documentation

Selecting and engaging with taonga held in museum collections

The project began by exploring museum collections, initially aiming to work across the four encyclopaedic museums³⁷ before focusing on the Alexander Turnbull Library, Auckland War Memorial Museum, and Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. This shift reflected both collection strengths and practical constraints of access and reproduction.

I initially aimed for a selection of 40-60 taonga, but this expanded slightly as relationships between objects and stories emerged through the iterative process. To explore relationships between taonga, archival traces, and community narratives, I developed six thematic constellations:

- Private life
- Performance
- Protest
- Health
- Queer space, and
- Everyday visibility.

These acted as exploratory lenses, highlighting both connections and gaps, and positioning selection as a form of inquiry rather than a neutral process.

Taonga span physical objects, ephemera, and photography, selected based on interpretive potential and their capacity to surface archival absences. To maintain a manageable scope, I focussed on material available through Collections Online or on display, while excluding items that could not be ethically or practically reproduced. Some taonga were omitted due to fragility, sensitivity, or access restrictions, prompting reflection on how institutional conditions shape both availability and interpretation. This positions selection as contingent rather than comprehensive, shaped by access as much as curatorial intent.

Reproduction permissions were sought for all selected taonga, embedding relational care within the process and influencing how each object could be realised as an artefact. Most rights holders were supportive, with only minor restrictions encountered,

³⁷ Auckland Museum (1852), Otago Museum (1865), Te Papa (founded as the Colonial Museum in 1865), and Canterbury Museum (1867). McCarthy, “From histories of museums to museum history: approaches to historicising colonial museums in Aotearoa New Zealand.”

suggesting that access barriers were less prohibitive than anticipated but still unevenly distributed.

The installation draws on approximately 80 taonga (see Appendix 2), translated into a range of artefacts including reproductions, recreations, and interpretive interventions, with a predominance of photographic and printed material shaping the overall visual field.

Making and reinterpreting artefacts

Selection led to processes of material translation, where taonga were reproduced or reimagined to address archival gaps or enable interaction within the exhibition. Practice constraints – including permissions, material availability, and scale – shaped these decisions alongside conceptual aims.

Artefact development preceded exhibition design, though spatial constraints informed early decisions. Large-scale textile works³⁸ and hero portrait displays provided early inspiration, adapted to the constraints of available space. The range of taonga required display strategies beyond standard photographic prints, shifting the exhibition toward everyday materiality rather than singular, monumental objects.

Most artefacts take the form of reproductions at plausible scale, proportion, and material. Scale was tested by printing A4 images and installing them on a wall. These tests altered my understanding of physical presence and informed decisions to reproduce selected artefacts – particularly posters – at original scale. Posters were initially designed as a continuous frieze and standardised to avoid hierarchy, printed on matte stock and presented without additional interpretation to maintain their graphic and material qualities.



Figure 3: Shortlisted taonga printed at A4 scale and displayed publicly (2024).

³⁸ Such as Arielle Walker, "On Returning to the Sea: Towards Belonging Through Land, Language, & Tactile Storytelling" (MVA thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2020), <https://hdl.handle.net/10292/13696>; Arielle Walker, "Mending the Kupenga: Towards a Language of Reciprocity Between Ancestral Textile & Storytelling Practices" (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2024), <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/18330>; Lissy Robinson-Cole and Rudi Robinson-Cole, *Wharenui Harikoa (House of Joy)*, 2023; Artists for Palestine Aotearoa, *Stitching Solidarity (Aotearoa Solidarity Quilt)*, 2024-present.

Where possible, production methods were aligned with the historical conditions of each artefact. For example, protest t-shirts and banners were screen-printed, placards painted from photographic references, and a 1986 poster recreated using risograph printing. This approach allowed me to approximate both visual appearance and modes of production and circulation, situating the artefacts within the conditions through which they were originally produced.

Other artefacts are presented as recreations, producing plausible facsimiles that vary in material, scale, or context. Trevor Morley's helmet was recreated as a crocheted cover fitted over a plastic costume helmet, referencing the original while shifting it into a textile register. The striped crochet draws on everyday handmade garments, maintaining material continuity while introducing a tactile, everyday register, while moving further from the authority of the original object.



Figure 4: Customised Police Helmet: original taonga (Te Papa: GH017761) and recreated artefact.

A similar strategy was applied in *Camp Mother & Camp Leader sampled*, translating knitted dolls of The Topp Twins into an embroidery sampler. This retains tactility and hand-scale while reworking the figures into a different material form. While this maintains interactivity, it risks adding a barrier layer to visitor interpretation.

Where direct reproduction was not possible, adaptive strategies were adopted. I reproduced sports uniforms as photographic screen-prints on t-shirts, and for complex garments such as Edward Cowley's *Golden Goddess* and Louisa Wall's jacket, produced accompanying booklets that make visible their construction rather than attempting full replication. These approaches acknowledge limits of access and production, shifting emphasis from replication to interpretation, but reducing the material fidelity associated with the original garments.



Figure 5: Detail of Camp Mother and Camp Leader sampled (embroidery).



Figure 6: Detail of The Creation of Golden Goddess (booklet).



Figure 7: Detail of Louisa Wall's Jacket (booklet).

Military Leisure [Photo album] developed from an initial set of four photographs of drag performers in military contexts. In isolation, these risked objectifying the subjects or reducing them to caricature. Additional leisure images were incorporated from military photographs in museum collections to situate them within everyday contexts. Printed with subtle variation in scale and finish to differentiate Queer-aligned images without isolating them. The album format allows handling and reordering, supporting comparison across contexts.

Krazy Knights v Rainbow Heroes autograph album separates autographs from the signed game ball and combines them with



Figure 8: Detail of Military Leisure [Photo album].

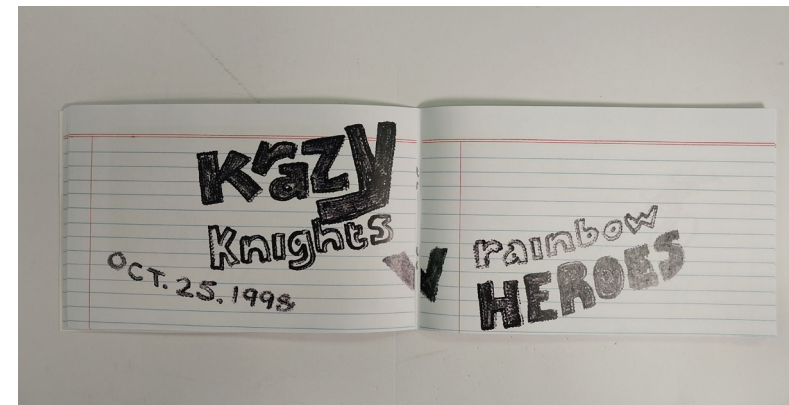


Figure 9: Detail of Krazy Knights v Rainbow Heroes autograph album.

photographs in a low-fidelity exercise book. This format evokes everyday use rather than formal display, shifting attention toward relationships between players, images, and interactions. Both albums are constructed assemblages, prioritising plausibility and domestic familiarity over institutional coherence while shifting how these images are encountered.

Not all photographs were bound into albums or frames. Additional images present across three formats: mounted prints processed with domestic materials but left unframed; *Pocket Prints* series and lockets designed for handling; and loose prints stored in boxes that require uncovering. These formats create varied conditions of access and engagement, but require visitors to actively uncover or handle material, limiting immediate visibility.

Artefacts generally respond to a single taonga, though some draw on multiple sources or generate several outputs. Eight protest placards (Figure 9) were produced using recycled cardboard and discarded screen-printing ink, reflecting the material conditions of activist making. These are stacked on the floor rather than displayed individually, emphasising their ephemeral, utilitarian character. This reduces visual prominence but reinforces their status as objects

of use, prioritising material practice over display, but limits their legibility as discrete artefacts within the exhibition.



Figure 10: Painted placards (above) and the 1974 Photograph used as reference (right). Ref: Alexander Turnbull Library: 23041778.

Absence and Reconsiderations

In several instances, I encountered ethical, cultural, and practical constraints that limited material transformation, requiring a shift toward absence, withholding, and adaptation as alternative ways of shaping meaning.

One such instance occurs in *This Object Has Been Removed from Display*. Initially conceived as a material response to an object within a museum collection, the work ultimately took the form of an empty museum storage box. Rather than reproducing the object, the final work retains only the institutional structures through which it would have been encountered, shifting the work from material translation toward deliberate absence.

A different form of reconsideration emerged following the death of Georgina Beyer during the early stages of the project, prompting a shift in how well-known figures are represented within the exhibition. Initial plans for a large-scale photographic reproduction based on a portrait of Beyer held in the Auckland Museum collection³⁹ risked reducing her to a single image.



Figure 11: Detail of *This Object Has Been Removed from Display*.

I instead produced a screen-printed fabric banner – *Your Hatred is Totally Intolerable* – featuring her 2004 response to anti-Rainbow protestors outside parliament, using colours drawn from that portrait. This redirects the work from portraiture toward text and circulation, but reduces the visual immediacy and recognisability associated with photographic representation.

Reconsideration also shaped *At least here we can be community* [four parts], where spatial constraints required a move away from earlier plans for architectural elements. In response, I developed a series of flyers referencing peer-support phone trees from the 1970s and 1980s, produced through risograph printing on found stock at a scale that suggests discreet circulation. Contextual material is embedded within the objects and via a QR code linking to PrideNZ oral histories. This results in a more portable form that positions community as provisional and sustained through ordinary materials. While this reduces the work's spatial impact, its portability extends its circulation beyond the exhibition.



Figure 12: Detail of *At least here we can be community* (flyers).

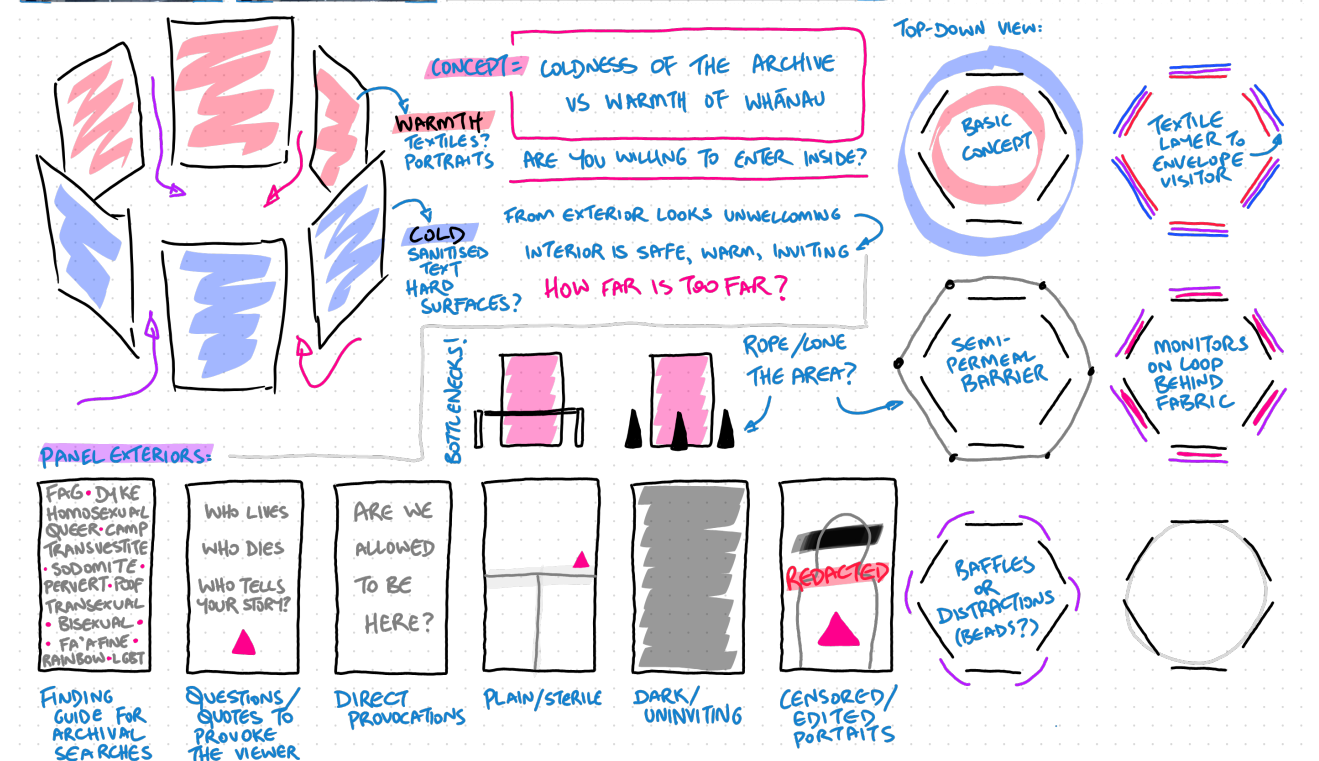
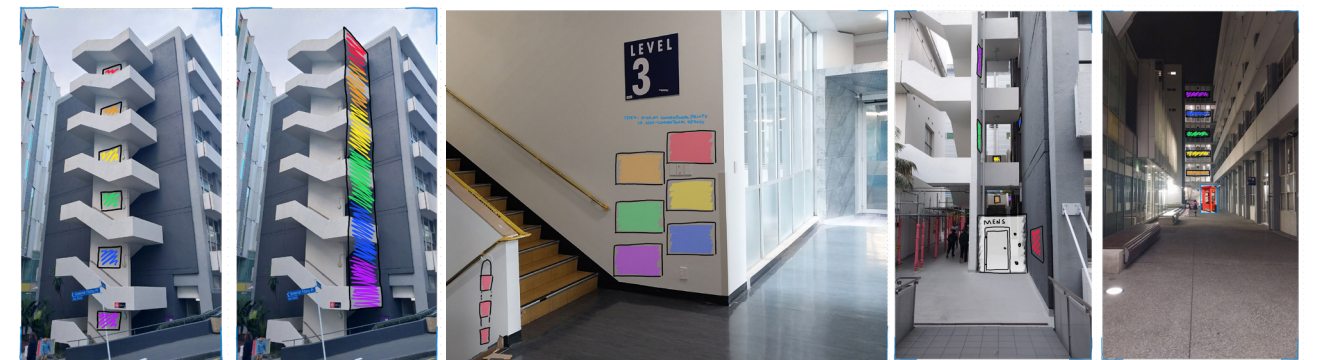
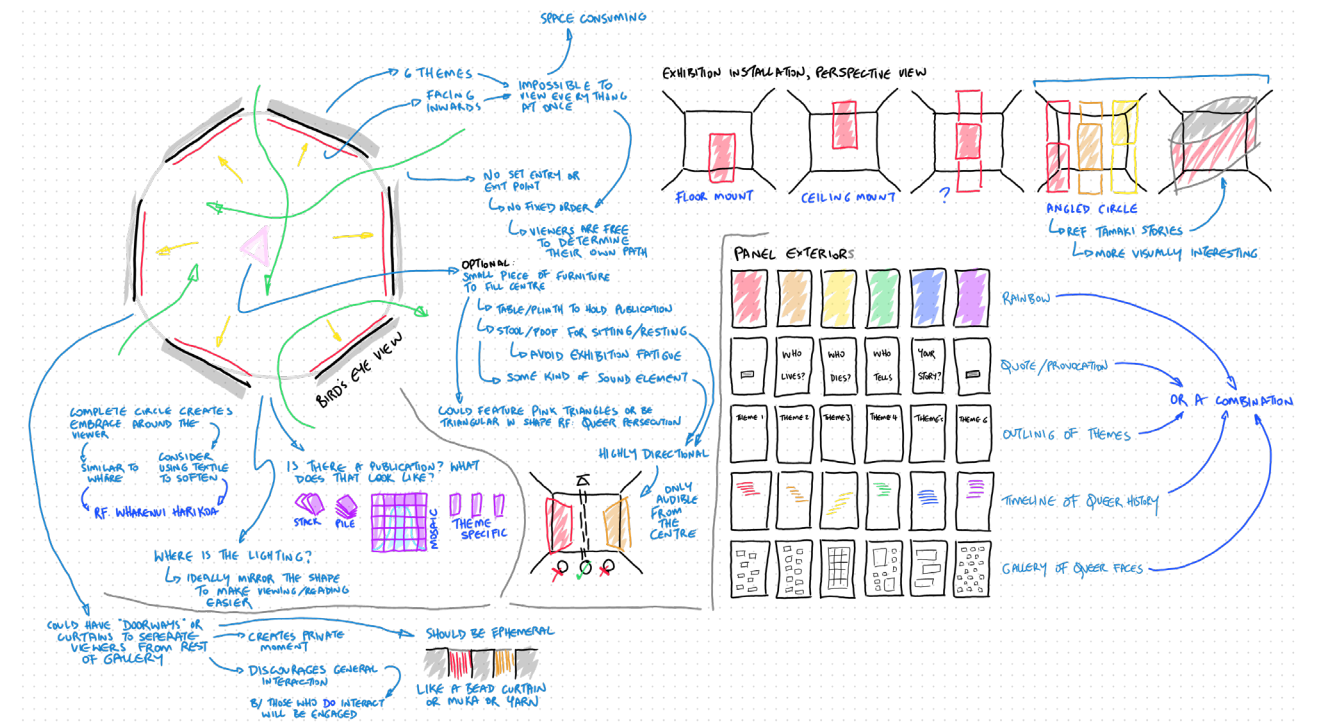
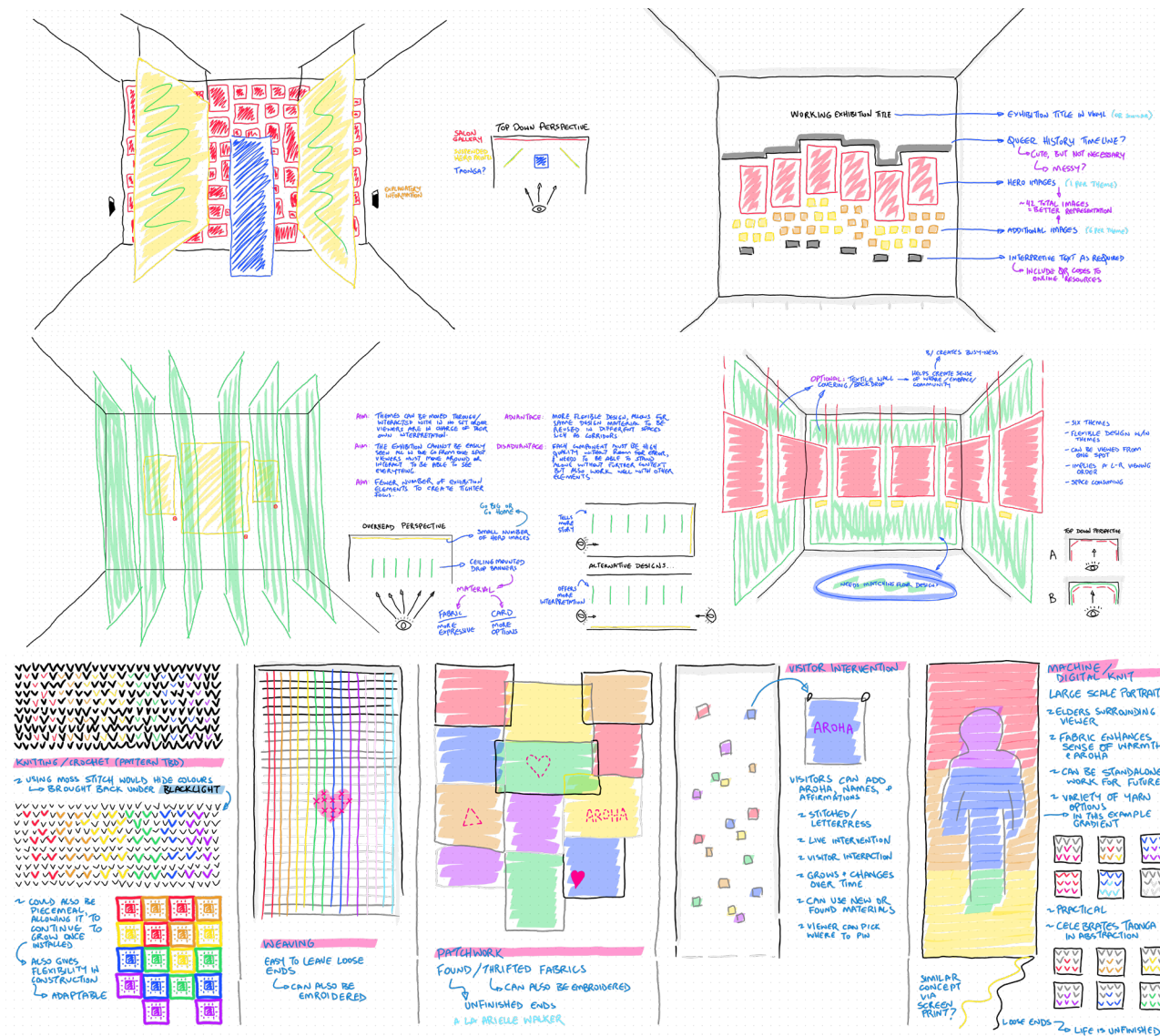
³⁹ Pati Solomona Tyrell, *Georgina Beyer*, 2019. Auckland Museum PH-2018-3-1.

Across production, these moments of absence, redirection, and adaptation sit alongside reproductions, recreations, and composites (see Appendix 3), reflecting a preference for translation over direct replication. Shaped by material constraints and conceptual aims, these strategies extend the project's methodological framework beyond material transformation alone. Meaning is shaped not only through what is made, but through decisions about when and how material intervention is limited, redirected, or refused, positioning interpretation as contingent on the conditions of access, reproduction, and display.

Designing the exhibition

As artefacts accumulated, attention turned to how they might be encountered together. The exhibition layout emphasises relational connections over linear chronology. My early experiments (Figure 12) with non-gallery spaces challenged viewers to step physically into the narrative but relied too heavily on didactic text and practicalities of these spaces prevented repeated visitor interaction opportunities.

Figure 12: Early exhibition design experiments (next two pages).



My later experiments involved the creation of a metaphorical Queer space surrounded by tūpuna and whānau, drawing on contemporary Māori creative practice,⁴⁰ by positioning a central exhibit within a field of kaitiaki taonga. I did not pursue this approach in the final exhibition, as it imposed a spatial hierarchy that conflicted with my aim for fluid, non-linear engagement, and proved difficult to sustain within the spatial constraints of the exhibition. Rather than resolving the exhibition around a centralised structure, a more distributed arrangement that allows relationships to emerge through proximity and movement was pursued. These experiments clarified the tension between symbolic coherence and relational openness and informed the decision to prioritise multiplicity over spatial resolution.

These early designs relied on more centralised spatial structures, which in retrospect aligned more closely with conventional exhibition models than with the distributed, relational approach outlined in Queer museology. Abandoning them was therefore not only a response to spatial constraints, but also a methodological shift toward forms of arrangement that better support non-linear and contingent interpretation.

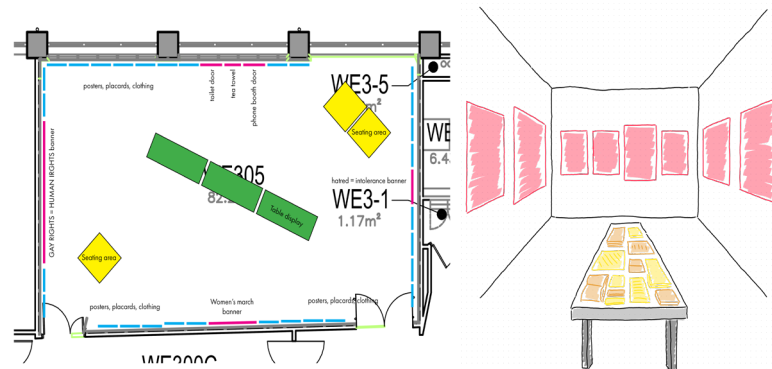


Figure 14: An exhibition design based on kaitiaki space.

The final design adopts a more flexible arrangement prioritising interaction between visitors and artefacts and allowing visitors to open, handle, and reposition objects, translating archival access into a physical encounter. This approach supports non-linear engagement and provides an opportunity for visitors to construct their own pathways through the material. Although taonga were selected through six thematic lenses, these were not labelled or spatially fixed. Artefacts are intermingled, with some material-based groupings emerging organically, and many artefacts remain unfixed so visitors can physically reconfigure relationships between them. These spatial decisions raised questions about how much interpretive guidance to provide, balancing openness with the risk of uneven or partial understanding.

⁴⁰ I was particularly drawn to: Erenora Puketapu-Hetet, *A cloak for the Sealord: Metal, paua shell pieces and feathers*, 2002; Erenora Puketapu-Hetet, Te Rangi Hetet, and Veranoa Hetet, *Cloak for the Sealord (Series II)*, 2005; Robinson-Cole and Robinson-Cole, *Wharenui Harikoa (House of Joy)*; Melanie Tangaere Baldwin, *PUPURITIA: Storytelling and Contemporary Textiles*, 5 April - 1 June [Exhibition catalogue] (Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, NZ: Objectspace, 2025). These works demonstrate the kaitiakitanga of textiles (including kākahu) and built spaces, allowing ancestors to embrace and protect the inhabitant. My reviews of the latter two exhibitions offer further discussion of these themes: Scott Pilkington, "Exhibition Review: Wharenui Harikoa (House of Joy) by Lissy Robinson-Cole and Rudi Robinson," *Context Dress/fashion/textiles* 44 (2023); Scott Pilkington, "Exhibition review: PUPURITIA: Storytelling and Contemporary Textiles," *Context Dress/fashion/textiles* 47 (2025).

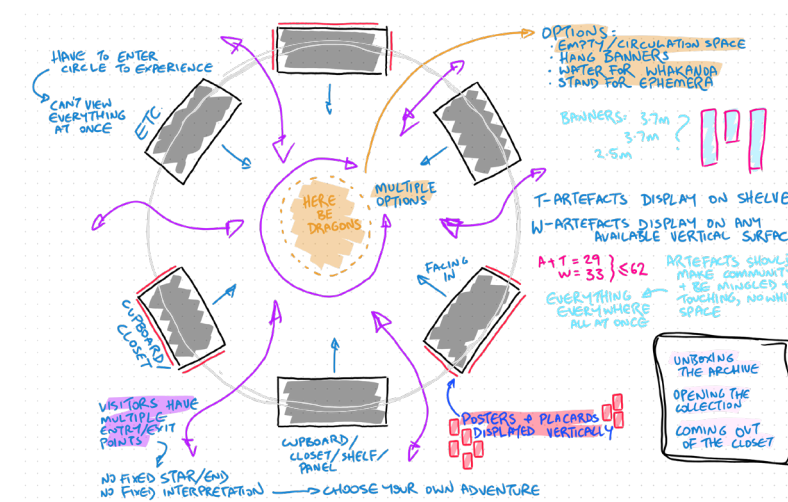


Figure 15: An exhibition design based on domestic furniture and visitor flow.



Figure 16: Testing of the final design, a simpler version of the design in Figure 14.

Interpretive strategies and visitor agency

While behavioural studies indicate that visitors often act predictably when entering an exhibition,⁴¹ this exhibition is structured without a fixed beginning, sequence, or endpoint. This allows visitors to enter at any point and construct their own personal narratives reducing curatorial control over how those narratives form. Works fixed to vertical surfaces resist sequential reading, while horizontal-displayed artefacts remain physically movable. By leaving gaps unresolved within the selection and arrangement of taonga, I make absence visible rather than smoothing it into coherence. While this approach supports visitor agency, it also risks uneven access to meaning, particularly for those unfamiliar with the historical context.

Some artefacts require more fixed placement, which influenced how I balanced flexibility with spatial constraints. Strong holdings around key legislative moments informed selection, but these were not presented as a linear narrative, instead contributing to a dispersed and non-sequential encounter. When posters formed part of a wider series, I picked those that could act as an exemplar of the group but also had the independence to be displayed in isolation. These decisions prioritise relational engagement over chronological or hierarchical interpretation.

To maintain visitor agency and to avoid implying an authoritative voice, interpretive materials were kept minimal and designed to provide contextual prompts rather than prescriptive narratives. Rather than use gallery labels, Appendix 1 of this exegesis will form a gallery guide, using brief text to support rapid comprehension. By providing context rather than interpretation, I intend to reinforce the principle that the visitor is the active agent in constructing historical understanding, while limiting the exhibition's ability to provide consistent contextual framing.

⁴¹ Visitor observation undertaken during my previous master's thesis indicated that, on entering an exhibition, visitors often orient themselves toward an adjacent wall rather than toward signposted starting points. When visitors later adjusted their viewing order, this change more frequently followed observation of other visitors' behaviour than engagement with interpretive text. Visitors who were alone were more likely to view exhibitions in reverse or unconventional order, while visitors in shared spaces tended to align their movement with others, as evidenced through overheard visitor conversations: Pilkington, "Communicating science in Aotearoa New Zealand museums: A pop-up medical exhibition case study."

Gaps and silences in archival records are deliberately foregrounded, aiming to create interpretive space so that audiences can encounter histories that are otherwise underrepresented. These approaches foreground multiplicity, creating different entry points for audiences with varying levels of prior knowledge.

6. Analysis and Commentary on Artefact

Exhibition as method

The exhibition is positioned as a method of inquiry rather than an illustrative outcome. Historical, ethical, and curatorial arguments are produced through the arrangement and encounter of objects in space, rather than through explanatory text. Meaning emerges through movement, comparison, and attention, situating the exhibition itself as a site of analysis. This approach aligns with Queer historiography, which resists linear narrative and interpretive closure. It shifts analysis from what is said about objects to how they are encountered, making exhibition design itself the site of argument.

Object-based analysis: how artefacts enact claims

The two albums demonstrate how meaning emerges through constructed proximity rather than fixed interpretation. In *Military Leisure [Photo Album]*, images produced across different contexts remain visibly distinct, but their placement within a single album invites comparison without resolving those differences. In *Krazy Knights v Rainbow Heroes autograph album*, the separation and recombination of autographs and photographs shifts attention from individual objects to relationships between people, events, and traces. In both cases, the album format produces a tension between fabrication and plausibility: while the arrangements are constructed, their material familiarity supports engagement as if they were ordinary archival objects. Interpretation remains provisional, shaped through handling, sequencing, and prior knowledge rather than curatorial instruction, limiting the exhibition's ability to stabilise meaning while expanding the range of possible readings.

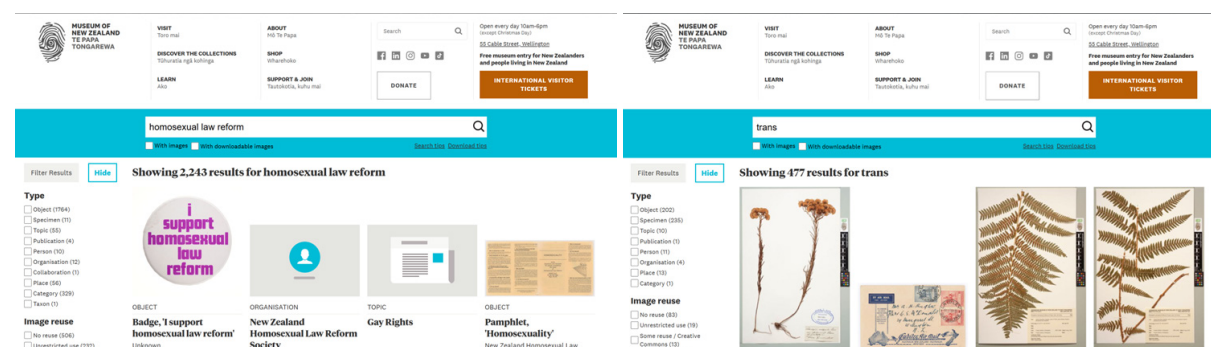


Figure 17: Screenshots from Te Papa Collections Online showing search results for different Queer topics. (April 2026).

Photographs elsewhere in the exhibition extend this approach through varied conditions of encounter. Mounted prints suggest care without formal display, *Pocket Prints* invite handling, and boxed photographs require deliberate discovery. These formats produce uneven access, encouraging different forms of attention rather than a single interpretive pathway.

Absence and partial access also operate as strategies for interpretation. *This Object Has Been Removed from Display* presents an empty conservation-grade museum storage box alongside two photographic references to a taonga Māori. A takeaway postcard extends the object's presence beyond the gallery. By withholding reproduction, the artefact foregrounds the limits of access and situates interpretations within these constraints. Rather than resolving the absence through reconstruction, the work allows the withheld taonga to remain partially accessible through its archival traces.⁴²

Across albums, photographs, and absent objects, interpretation arises through arrangement, access, and constraint rather than explanation. These works direct attention not only to what is present, but to what is missing, and to the conditions that produce those absences.

Material and spatial strategies

The exhibition works primarily with reproductions and recreations of taonga for both practical and epistemological reasons. Reproductions permit handling, proximity, and interaction, allowing visitors to relate to artefacts as lived objects rather than sacralised relics. This approach shifts attention from singular, authoritative objects toward everyday encounter.

I aimed to produce historically plausible objects that feel ordinary rather than exceptional. Crude replicas risk undermining credibility, while conservation-grade facsimiles introduce distance without adding interpretive value. Prioritising everyday materiality also responds to the uneven preservation of Queer histories in institutional collections, where ordinary objects are less likely to be retained.

By using domestic (often second-hand) frames to evoke mantelpiece display, introducing wear and patina where feasible, and relying on household materials throughout, the material choices reinforce this approach. These conditions signal use and handling, supporting engagement through familiarity rather than

⁴² For example: Josiah Martin, [*Display of Auckland Museum Institute collections*]. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira.

spectacle. Where direct reproduction would limit interpretive potential, I used material transformation to rework taonga into new forms.

These choices reduce curatorial authority and avoid positioning the exhibition as a fixed source of meaning. For example, photographs and posters are reproduced without added commentary, allowing them to function as historical records while leaving interpretation open.

Ephemera and temporal shifts

Take-away artefacts extend the exhibition beyond the gallery, functioning as mnemonic devices that support recall and re-engagement. Some reference specific taonga (such as *I Signed 27 Times!*), while others connect objects to broader cultural material, including song lyrics (*A Different Kind of Teddy Bears' Picnic*) or my experience of institutional navigation (*Archival Finding Tool*).⁴³ These items function as memory aids and as practical tools: visitors can mark, annotate, and revisit them after leaving. The exhibition therefore persists through use rather than remaining site-bound, reflecting the dispersed and inconsistently catalogued nature of Queer histories in institutional collections.

Selected artefacts also introduce temporal reflection, positioning the exhibition in relation to ongoing Queer politics without overstating continuity. In *1986–2026: 40 Years of Homosexual Law Reform*, a letterpress bookmark situates the exhibition within a specific temporal frame. In *Queer Rights are Human Rights (the next generation continues the fight)*, I reproduced a 1985 banner and added a contemporary edit to acknowledge shifts in language and the continuation of activism beyond legislative milestones. I extended this approach in *Trans Rights Are Human Rights*, creating a placard consistent with current protest language but absent from the 1974 photograph informing other works.

These interventions connect historical material to present conditions while highlighting how institutional collections can fix Queer histories in the past. Meaning emerges not only through what is displayed, but through how objects circulate, persist, and are reused beyond the exhibition.

⁴³ Although forewarned in the research of Tuan Nguyen and Tom Furber: Nguyen, "Queering Australian Museums: Management, Collections, Exhibitions, and Connections."; Furber, "Straight from the Archives: Reflections about Professional Engagement with LGBTQ+ Lives."

Visitor agency and constructed narratives

Objects are encountered across varied formats, from immediately visible works to those requiring handling or discovery. This uneven accessibility produces different forms of attention and engagement rather than a single interpretive pathway.

Visitors are not directed through a fixed sequence. Many artefacts can be handled, repositioned, or revisited, allowing narratives to form through movement and comparison. This openness accommodates differing levels of familiarity: some visitors may build initial understanding through exploration, while others draw on prior knowledge or personal memory.

This reduces curatorial control over interpretation, making outcomes less predictable. This approach accepts the likelihood of partial or uneven understanding. Rather than resolving ambiguity in advance, the exhibition allows misreading, association, and affect to operate alongside historical knowledge. Meaning develops through encounter, shaped by access, attention, and prior experience rather than curatorial instruction.

Objects such as the newspaper-style contextualisation for *Capital's Devotion Parade a Colourful Celebration* and the inserted material in the *Lesbian Safe Sex Kit [replica]* provide optional interpretive layers embedded within the artefacts themselves. Rather than separating context from object through labels, these strategies distribute interpretation across material forms, allowing visitors to engage or bypass contextual information.

Ethical and curatorial implications

Ethical considerations emerged through the processes of selecting, reproducing, and reconfiguring taonga, rather than as a separate stage of analysis. Decisions about inclusion, material form, and display respond to access conditions, cultural sensitivity, and context.

Requests for reproduction permissions clarified how taonga could be accessed, reproduced, and circulated. These conditions did not simply limit inclusion; they shaped how artefacts were approached. In some cases, reproduction allowed close material approximation, while in others, restrictions required adaptation, partial representation, or omission. These variations highlight how access is mediated through institutional and legal structures.

Decisions about individual artefacts balanced creative interpretation with care. Some works were reproduced

with minimal intervention to retain their relational and commemorative qualities, while others were more substantially reworked where context allowed. The exhibition avoids retroactive identification and limits interpretive claims where meanings remain uncertain or contested. In some cases, taonga were excluded where inclusion risked reinforcing harm or reproducing hostile contexts.⁴⁴

Photographs of figures such as Carmen Rupe and Chrissy Witoko are reproduced without alteration and presented in domestic-style frames, maintaining their commemorative and relational qualities. This approach limits reinterpretation where cultural and personal significance is already established, contrasting with more experimental strategies applied to less sensitive material.



Figure 18: Portraits of Carmen Rupe and Chrissy Witoko. Te Papa.

Working primarily with reproductions enables handling and interaction while foregrounding mediation. Artefacts retain visible markers of construction, resisting the authority implied by indistinguishable facsimiles. Ethical considerations are therefore embedded within the exhibition itself, shaping how visitors encounter material and recognise the limits of access, knowledge, and representation.

7. Reflections and implications

What the exhibition demonstrates

This project positions exhibition-making as a form of enquiry, where historical, ethical, and curatorial questions are explored through material and spatial practice rather than resolved in advance. The exhibition does not translate research into a fixed narrative; it tests how meaning can emerge through encounter, comparison, and movement.

⁴⁴ Tyson Yunkaporta, "Chapter 1: The Porcupine, the Paleo-Mind and the Grand Design," in *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2018); Tula Brannelly and Amohia Boulton, "The ethics of care and transformational research practices in Aotearoa New Zealand," *Qualitative Research* 17, no. 3 (2017).

Across approximately 60 artefacts, developed through reproduction, reconstruction, and intervention, design operates as a method of thinking. Reorderable formats, varied photographic presentations, and artefacts intended for handling create shifting conditions of visibility and engagement, allowing interpretation to remain provisional rather than fixed. These approaches extend across the body of work rather than being confined to individual pieces.

Working with reproductions and constructed artefacts supports this approach by enabling proximity, circulation, and reconfiguration, while also introducing questions of authenticity and authority. Decisions to withhold or not reproduce certain taonga further shape this dynamic by foregrounding absence as part of the interpretive structure rather than a gap to be resolved.

Ethical considerations are embedded within these material decisions. I made choices about what to reproduce, transform, or withhold in relation to the context and sensitivity of each taonga, shaping how it is encountered without asserting interpretive authority over it. Limiting didactic text reinforced this position, allowing relationships between visitors and artefacts to develop without a single explanatory voice.

Together, these strategies suggest how exhibition practice can generate relational, partial, and contingent engagements with Aotearoa Queer histories. Rather than presenting a complete account, the exhibition structures conditions in which meaning is assembled through interaction with objects, space, and other visitors.

Emergent insights and surprises

One of the most significant insights to emerge through this project is the extent to which the material encountered resists “exceptionalism”. While Queer histories are often framed through moments of rupture, visibility, or activism, many of the taonga point instead to ordinariness: leisure, friendship, domestic life, and everyday participation. Photographs, personal items, and ephemeral materials acquire impact through accumulation and relation, rather than through singular prominence.

This emphasis on ordinariness highlights the unevenness of the archival record. The individuals and moments represented within museum collections are not necessarily representative; they were preserved, collected, or later documented. Visibility within the archive can privilege particular figures, locations, or events

while leaving others unrecorded. Absence is not only a gap but a structural feature of how histories are assembled.

Working across a broad set of artefacts made these dynamics more apparent. Materials that initially appeared minor or supplementary – such as informal photographs or low-cost printed ephemera – often proved central in shaping relationships, contexts, and continuities. More recognisable items sometimes required restraint to avoid reinforcing singular or monumental narratives. This shift from exceptional to everyday prioritised relational context over individual prominence.

Designing for non-linear encounter and varied levels of visibility further suggests that, within this exhibition, engagement with Queer histories does not depend on comprehensive access or complete information. Visitors may encounter only fragments of the material, yet still form connections, recognise patterns, or reflect on absence. Partial and situated encounters support forms of understanding that remain open and revisable, rather than complete or resolved.

Tensions and limitations

The exhibition operates within spatial and temporal constraints that shape how it can be encountered. Prioritising non-linear movement and limited interpretive guidance supports open-ended engagement, but visitors seeking clarity, context, or narrative continuity may find these deliberately withheld. This introduces a trade-off between interpretive openness and accessibility, where not all visitors are equally supported in constructing meaning.

Material and spatial strategies introduce further constraints. Reproductions and constructed artefacts enable handling, proximity, and reconfiguration, but shift expectations of authenticity and authority associated with museum objects. While these strategies foreground interpretation rather than replication, they may also unsettle visitors who rely on material authenticity as a basis for trust or understanding.

The archival record imposes additional limits. Working primarily with collections from Auckland Museum, Te Papa, and the Alexander Turnbull Library shapes which histories can be represented, reflecting existing patterns of collection, preservation, and access. Significant gaps remain, particularly regarding Asian, disabled, refugee, and intersex communities, and experiences

outside major urban centres.⁴⁵ These absences are not resolved within the exhibition, but are incorporated as part of its interpretive structure, without fully addressing their structural causes.

Practical constraints influenced scale, material, and spatial layout. Early design concepts exploring more immersive or segmented approaches were not sustained, resulting in a more flexible but less structured arrangement. While this supports interaction and adaptability, it reduces control over spatial relationships and limits the extent to which specific narratives or juxtapositions can be maintained.

Positionality, labour, and limits of practice

This project is shaped by a situated curatorial position developed within and alongside the communities it engages, informing decisions about selection, reproduction, and interpretation. Rather than claiming neutrality, the exhibition adopts partiality and restraint as methodological conditions.

Ethical positions emerged through making rather than predefinition, requiring case-by-case decisions about reproduction, presentation, and withholding. Some artefacts were abandoned or reworked where initial approaches risked overexposure, misrepresentation, or interpretive overreach. These moments of revision form part of the project's methodological structure, demonstrating how ethical limits are encountered in practice.

Working with Queer histories involved sustained emotional and intellectual labour, particularly in encounters with fragmentary records of loss and marginalisation, which informed decisions to limit or withhold representation in specific instances. Engagement required stepping back from particular taonga when conditions risked harm or overdetermination, contributing to the exhibition's emphasis on absence, restraint, and partial representation.⁴⁶

As an insider researcher, I navigated heightened responsibility, proximity, and authority. Contemporary events echoed patterns encountered in the archive, reinforcing that this material remains active and unresolved.⁴⁷ Rather than incorporating these parallels explicitly into the exhibition, the project responds through tone and structure, prioritising care, ordinariness, and continuity over spectacle or crisis.

The project was realised alongside full-time work, health considerations, and personal commitments. These shaped scale,

⁴⁵ In searches across the three institutions consulted, very few taonga representing Asian Queer lives were located. Of the small number identified, only one was included in the exhibition, one was excluded due to contextual mismatch, and one was not included because it features my husband: New Zealand AIDS Foundation, "We wear it to protect us all" poster, 2016. Collection of Te Papa Tongarewa, Ref: GH025367. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2019.

⁴⁶ I chose not to work with the New Zealand AIDS Memorial Quilt, as its physical and affective scale, the number of contributors involved, and the mana of the project exceed the spatial, temporal, and ethical scope of this exhibition. I intend to examine the quilt in future research and have begun building a relationship with its kaitiaki. New Zealand AIDS Memorial Quilt Project, *New Zealand AIDS Memorial Quilt*, 1988-present.

⁴⁷ I reflect further on the role of self-care in research in: Scott Pilkington, "Staying Safe as a Researcher," *Thesislink* [blog], Graduate Research School, Auckland University of Technology, 14 November, 2024, <https://thesislink.aut.ac.nz/?p=10650>. For related accounts of the affect impact of working with contested or politically charged material as an insider, see: Allan, "What Homophobic Thinking Looks Like: Insights from New Zealand's Homosexual Law Reform Debates of the Late 20th Century."; Kidman et al., *Fragments from a Contested Past: Remembrance, Denial and New Zealand History*.

pace, and material decisions. Rather than being external limitations, these factors are integrated into the methodological framework, reflecting how practice-led research is always shaped by context.

Coming to this project from outside formal design training, I experienced persistent uncertainty about my legitimacy as a practitioner working across design, museum studies, and history. Rather than resolving this position, I worked through it in practice. This uncertainty, alongside my position as a bisexual researcher navigating partial belonging within Queer communities, shaped a curatorial approach that prioritises forms of experience not dependent on institutional validation or highly visible identity. I treated these uncertainties not as barriers to overcome, but as conditions that informed the work.

In response, I developed an exhibition that privileges less publicly legible and everyday expressions of Queerness over spectacular, event-based, or highly visible narratives. This emphasis positions ordinary Queer lives as historically and culturally significant and creates space for visitors whose experiences may not align with dominant or highly visible forms of Queer identity.

These experiences clarify the limits of what the project can claim: it demonstrates how curatorial and design strategies can support engagement with partial, uneven, and emotionally charged histories, while remaining constrained by the conditions in which they are produced.

Research questions in practice

Together, these reflections show how iterative, material, and spatial practice opens ways of encountering Aotearoa Queer histories within the specific conditions of this project. The exhibition experiments with relational and non-linear engagement, foregrounding absence, multiplicity, and ordinariness while remaining attentive to ethical, material, and emotional constraints.

Through processes of making, arranging, and withholding, I demonstrate how curatorial and design strategies shape what histories can be surfaced and how gaps in the archival record can be acknowledged without attempting completion. Insights emerge from the process itself – encountering fragmentary taonga, negotiating permissions, and navigating personal and community histories – rather than being fully resolved in advance.

The project therefore positions exhibition-making as both a research method and a provisional site of reflection, demonstrating its capacity to engage with incomplete, contested, and ongoing histories while remaining bounded by the conditions of its production.

8. Conclusion and Future Directions

This project indicates that exhibitions can function as active sites of research, generating knowledge through material, spatial, and design-led practice rather than merely illustrating it. By iteratively selecting, arranging, and mediating museum taonga, the exhibition explores how Aotearoa Queer histories can be made perceptible, relational, and open-ended. Decisions about layout, handling, and interpretive restraint positioned histories as contingent, emphasising relationality, absence, and multiplicity over fixed narratives.

Through material and spatial strategies, the exhibition translates theoretical concerns – including Queer temporality, relational memory, and archival gaps – into embodied experiments. Reproduced posters were presented without commentary, photographs were assembled into composite albums, and taonga were reinterpreted through absence and substitution. These choices foreground gaps, support provisional engagement, and invite visitors to form connections without prescribing interpretation. Consultation with rights holders, ethical negotiation, and sensitivity to context shaped how taonga were handled, displayed, and withheld, demonstrating how curatorial practice can integrate care, constraint, and relational responsibility.

The project further suggests that exhibition-making can operate as a knowledge-producing practice within these parameters. Materiality, spatiality, and interpretive restraint act as methods for exploring historical, ethical, and curatorial questions through encounter rather than explanation, as demonstrated through these design decisions. Visitors experience histories as incomplete, contingent, and ongoing, allowing recognition of presence without overdetermination. The project addresses the central research question by showing that exhibitions of creatively reinterpreted museum taonga can generate new forms of engagement with Aotearoa Queer histories, making archival

absences perceptible while supporting relational and open-ended interpretation.

Beyond this iteration, the project opens pathways for future work. The approach could extend to local and regional contexts, broader communities, or collaborative curatorial partnerships. Public engagement might expand through workshops, community-led contributions, or the inclusion of oral histories and taonga beyond institutional collections. Further outputs could include reflective publications pairing artefact images with commentary or scholarly work on a range of topics, including textiles, museum collections, and Queer public history. These directions build on the project's core methods rather than replacing them, showing how practice-led research can continue to generate insight through engagement, experimentation, and care. ¶

References cited

- Allan, Quentin. "Gay Men Coming out Later in Life: A Hermeneutic Analysis of Acknowledging Sexual Orientation to Oneself." *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology* 24 (2024): e2343656. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20797222.2024.2343656>.
- . "What Homophobic Thinking Looks Like: Insights from New Zealand's Homosexual Law Reform Debates of the Late 20th Century." *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025): 37-54.
- Almond, Gemma. "Why the Anonymous and Everyday Objects Are Important: Using the Science Museum's Collections to Re-Write the History of Vision Aids." *Science Museum Group Journal Spring* (2020). <https://doi.org/10.15180/201306>.
- Antón, Carmen, Carmen Camarero, and María-José Garrido. "A Journey through the Museum: Visit Factors That Prevent or Further Visitor Satiation." *Annals of Tourism Research* 73 (2018): 48-61. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2018.08.002>.
- Armstrong, Eleanor S. "Towards Queer Tours in Science and Technology Museums." *Museum and Society* 20, no. 2 (2022): 205-20. <https://journals.le.ac.uk/ojs1/index.php/mas/article/view/3941/3529>.
- Artists for Palestine Aotearoa. "Stitching Solidarity (Aotearoa Solidarity Quilt)." 2024-present.
- Ballantyne, Tony. "Collecting, Colonisation and Civic Culture in Southern New Zealand." *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020): 42-60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19369816.2020.1760050>.
- Bell, Claudia. "My Grandmother Had One of Those!" Chap. 3 In *Inventing New Zealand - Everyday Myths of Pakeha Identity*, edited by Claudia Bell. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books, 1996.
- . "Pakeha Identity and Material Culture." In *Being Cultural*, edited by Bruce M Z Cohen. Auckland, NZ: Pearson, 2012.
- Bell, Claudia, and Lindsay Neill. "'Think of New Zealand as a Small Town': Methodological and Ethical Issues in Researching Everyday Culture." *Critical Arts* 30, no. 1 (2016): 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02560046.2016.1164381>.
- Bell, Taryn, and Penny Spikins. "The Object of My Affection: Attachment Security and Material Culture." *Time and Mind* 11, no. 1 (2018): 23-39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1751696X.2018.1433355>.
- Bhattacharyya, Pratishtha, and Rabindra Kumar Pradhan. "Cherishing: Developing a Measurement for Objects of Cherishing." *Current Psychology* 42, no. 9 (2023): 7659-72. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02116-5>.
- Bissonauth, Natasha. "The Future of Museological Display: Chitra Ganesh's Speculative Encounters." In *Museums, Sexuality, and Gender Activism*, edited by Joshua Adair and Amy K Levin. London, UK: Routledge, 2020.
- Bitgood, Stephen. "An Analysis of Visitor Circulation: Movement Patterns and the General Value Principle." *Curator: The Museum Journal* 49, no. 4 (2006): 463-75.
- . "An Attention-Value Model of Museum Visitors." *Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education*: Washington, DC, USA (2010).
- . *Attention and Value : Keys to Understanding Museum Visitors*. Walnut Creek, United States: Routledge, 2013.
- . "Museum Fatigue: A Critical Review." *Visitor Studies* 12, no. 2 (2009): 93-111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10645570903203406>.
- . "When Is 'Museum Fatigue' Not Fatigue?." *Curator: The Museum Journal* 52, no. 2 (2009): 193-202. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/j.2151-6952.2009.tb00344.x>.
- Bitgood, Stephen, and Stephany Dukes. "Not Another Step! Economy of Movement and Pedestrian Choice Point Behavior in Shopping Malls." *Environment and behavior* 38, no. 3 (2006): 394-405.
- Black, Graham. "Remember the 70%: Sustaining 'Core' Museum Audiences." *Museum Management and Curatorship* 31, no. 4 (2016): 386-401. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09647775.2016.1165625>.
- Brannelly, Tula, and Amohia Boulton. "The Ethics of Care and Transformational Research Practices in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Qualitative Research* 17, no. 3 (2017): 340-50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794117698916>.
- Brickell, Chris. *Mates & Lovers: A History of Gay New Zealand*. Auckland, NZ: Random House, 2008.
- . "Queer Lives in State Archives." Keith Sinclair Lecture, Auckland, NZ, University of Auckland, 2022.
- . "What Makes a Queer Object? With Chris Brickell." Wellington, NZ: Te Papa, 2020. <https://youtu.be/FyqcGTc7dD0>.
- Brickell, Chris, and Judith Collard, eds. *Queer Objects*. Dunedin, NZ: Otago University Press, 2019.
- Cairns, Puawai, "Decolonise or Indigenise: Moving Towards Sovereign Spaces and the Māorification of New Zealand Museology," *Te Papa Blog*. Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, 10 Feb 2023, 2020, <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2020/02/10/decolonise-or-indigenise-moving-towards-sovereign-spaces-and-the-maorification-of-new-zealand-museology/>.
- Chidgey, Red, and Joanne Garde-Hansen. *Museums, Archives and Protest Memory*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2024. doi:10.1007/978-3-031-44478-4_1.
- Darbyshire, Jo. *The Gay Museum: An Exhibition Exploring the History of Lesbian and Gay Presence in Western Australia [Exhibition Catalogue]*. Perth, Australia, 2003. https://www.jodarbyshire.com/uploads/text-files/gay_museum_catalogue.pdf.

———. “Restlessness of Meaning: An Exploration of How Visual Artists Are Working with Museum Collections.” MCA exegesis, Curtin University of Technology, 2003. <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11937/2511>.

Das, Stuti. “Queer Methodologies and Social Science.” In *Companion to Sexuality Studies*, edited by Nancy A Naples, 95-121, 2020.

Davey, Gareth. “What Is Museum Fatigue?” *Visitor Studies Today* 8, no. 3 (2005): 17-21.

Day, Alison S. “A Holistic Exploration of the Collecting and Connecting Experiences of LGBTQ+ Communities, Their Independent Archives and the Glamu Sector in New Zealand.” *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* 72, no. 3 (2023): 306-07. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24750158.2023.2212941>.

———. “Seize the Initiative: In-Process LGBTQ+ Research Findings and Their Impact on Connecting Practices in New Zealand Glamu Institutions.” *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 60, no. 1 (2023): 560-64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/pa2.815>.

de Oliveira Andreotti, Vanessa, Sharon Stein, Cash Ahenakew, and Dallas Hunt. “Mapping Interpretations of Decolonization in the Context of Higher Education.” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 4, no. 1 (2015): 21-40. <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22168>.

Derksen, Peter. “Where Is the Queer? A Case Study of LGBTQ Representation in Aotearoa New Zealand Exhibitions.” MMHS dissertation, Victoria University of Wellington, 2018. <https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10063/7786>.

Dirk, Grayson. “Do It Off Broadway: Exploring the Politics of Diversity and Inclusion in Museums through Risk, Advocacy, and Queer Experience.” MA thesis, University of Washington, 2018. https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/42004/Dirk_washington_0250O_18689.pdf.

Eria, Migoto, “The Mana of Taonga and What It Means for Museums in Aotearoa,” *Te Papa Blog*. Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, 2018, <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2018/09/12/the-mana-of-taonga-and-what-it-means-for-museums-in-aotearoa/>.

Falk, John, and Lynn D Dierking. “The Contextual Model of Learning (2000).” In *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, edited by Gail Anderson, 139-42. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2004.

Falk, John H, and Martin Storksdieck. “Using the Contextual Model of Learning to Understand Visitor Learning from a Science Center Exhibition.” *Science Education* 89, no. 5 (2005): 744-78. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.20078>.

Falk, John H. “Contextualizing Falk’s Identity-Related Visitor Motivation Model.” *Visitor Studies* 14, no. 2 (2011): 141-57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10645578.2011.608002>.

Frayling, Christopher. “Research in Art and Design.” *Royal College of Art Research Papers* 1, no. 1 (1993/1994).

———. ““...to Know the Place for the First Time...” : Exploring and Researching through the Arts.” In *The Artist and Academia*, edited by Helen Phelan and Graham F. Welch. London: Routledge, 2021.

Freeman, Elliot. “Defying Description: Searching for Queer History in Institutional Archives.” *Archival Science* 23, no. 3 (2023): 447-70. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-023-09415-9>.

Furber, Tom. “Straight from the Archives: Reflections About Professional Engagement with LGBTQ+ Lives.” *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 14, no. 1-2 (2020): 56-61.

Gaimster, David. “Fitting the Colonial Museum Dashboard? Civic Action, Curatorial Agency and Identity Building at the Auckland Museum (1852–1929).” *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020): 80-94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19369816.2020.1760056>.

Gardella, Annalise. “Visibility, Violence and Queerness: Examining the Potentiality of Photographs.” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 6, no. 1 (2021): 55-72. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/qsmcpc_00044_1.

Gilman, Benjamin Ives. “Museum Fatigue.” *The Scientific Monthly* 2, no. 1 (1916): 62-74. www.jstor.org/stable/6127.

Hamilakis, Yannis. “Re-Collecting the Fragments: Archaeology as Mnemonic Practice.” In *Material Mnemonics: Everyday Memory in Prehistoric Europe*, edited by Katina T Lillios and Vasileios Tsamis, 188-99: Oxbow Books, 2010.

Hamley, Logan, Shiloh Groot, Jade Le Grice, Ashlea Gillon, Lara Greaves, Madhavi Manchi, and Terryann Clark. ““You’re the One That Was on Uncle’s Wall!”: Identity, Whanaungatanga and Connection for Takatāpui (LGBTQ+ Māori).” *Genealogy* 5, no. 2 (2021): 54. <https://www.mdpi.com/2313-5778/5/2/54>.

“Queer History Research Guide.” National Library Blog, National Library, 2017, accessed 27 June, 2025, <https://natlib.govt.nz/blog/tagged/598/queer-history>.

Hoad, Catherine, and Rachael Gunn. “Queer Contexts in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand.” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 4, no. 1 (2019): 3-12. https://doi.org/10.1386/qsmcpc_00001_2.

Hollingsworth, Abigail. “The Role the LGBTQ+ Community Plays in Preserving Their Own History: The Rise of Lgbtqia+ Grassroots Archives.” *SLIS Connecting* 11, no. 2 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.18785/sl.1102.05>.

Ilmonen, Kaisa, and Tuula Juvonen. “Queer Traditions: Politics of Remembering.” *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 8, no. 1-2 (2014): 6-10.

Ings, Welby. "Ensuring the Family Home: The Responsibilities of Queer Scholarship." *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025): 7-20.

———. "Into the Light: Sexuality, Erasure and Recollection." *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 4, no. 1 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1386/qsmprc_00150_1.

———. "Sparrow." [Film]. 15m. New Zealand, 2016.

Kerekere, Elizabeth. "LGBT Activism among Māori." In *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, edited by Nancy A Naples, renée c hoogland, Wai Ching Angela Wong and Maithree Wickramasinghe, 1-5, 2016.

———. "Part of the Whānau: The Emergence of Takatāpui Identity - He Whāriki Takatāpui." PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2017.

Kidman, Joanna. "Pedagogies of Forgetting: Colonial Encounters and Nationhood at New Zealand's National Museum." In *Teaching and Learning Difficult Histories in International Contexts*, edited by Terrie Epstein and Carla Peck. New York, USA: Routledge, 2017.

Kidman, Joanna, and Cherie Chu. "Scholar Outsiders in the Neoliberal University: Transgressive Academic Labour in the Whitestream." *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 52, no. 1 (2017): 7-19. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40841-017-0079-y>.

Kidman, Joanna, Liana MacDonald, Hine Funaki, Adreanne Ormond, Pine Southon, and Huia Tomlins-Jahnkne. "'Native Time' in the White City: Indigenous Youth Temporalities in Settler-Colonial Space." *Children's Geographies* 19, no. 1 (2021): 24-36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2020.1722312>.

Kidman, Joanna, Vincent O'Malley, Liana Macdonald, Tom Roa, and Keziah Wallis. *Fragments from a Contested Past: Remembrance, Denial and New Zealand History*. BWB Texts. Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books, 2022.

Lamuse, Ti, Emmy Rāketē, and Will Hansen. "Combat Safetyism." *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025): 122-30.

Leenen-Young, Marcia, Sereana Naepi, Patrick Saulmatino Thomsen, David Taufui Mikato Fa'avae, Moeata Keil, and Jacoba Matapo. "'Pillars of the Colonial Institution Are Like a Knowledge Prison': The Significance of Decolonizing Knowledge and Pedagogical Practice for Pacific Early Career Academics in Higher Education." *Teaching in Higher Education* 26, no. 7-8 (2021): 986-1001. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1928062>.

Lichtenstein, Bronwen. "The Iconography of Eve: Epidemiologic Discourse in New Zealand's Response to HIV/AIDS." PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 1996. <https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/items/a17bc7e5-4299-433d-a71b-d8eadc27c073>.

Light, Rowan. *Why Memory Matters: 'Remembered Histories' and the Politics of the Shared Past*. BWB Texts. Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books, 2023.

Light, Rowan, and Nigel Borell. *Atarau: Stories of the New Zealand Wars*. Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum, 2025.

MacDonald, Liana, and Joanna Kidman. "Uncanny Pedagogies: Teaching Difficult Histories at Sites of Colonial Violence." *Critical Studies in Education* 63, no. 1 (2022): 31-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2021.1923543>.

Mayeda, David, Alan France, Tepora Pukepuke, Lucy Cowie, and Marilyn Chetty. "Colonial Disparities in Higher Education: Explaining Racial Inequality for Māori Youth in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Social Policy and Society* 21, no. 1 (2022): 80-92. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1474746421000464>.

McAllister, Tara G, Joanna Kidman, Olivia Rowley, and RF Theodore. "Why Isn't My Professor Māori? A Snapshot of the Academic Workforce in New Zealand Universities." *MAI Journal* 8 (2019): 235-49.

McCarthy, Conal. "From Histories of Museums to Museum History: Approaches to Historicising Colonial Museums in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020): 95-110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19369816.2020.1759008>.

McCrory, Adrien Johnnie. "Queer Stories... and Queer Silences." *History Australia* 19, no. 3 (2022): 596-98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14490854.2022.2103439>.

McKinnon, Scott, Andrew Gorman-Murray, and Dale Dominey-Howes. "Remembering an Epidemic during a Disaster: Memories of HIV/AIDS, Gay Male Identities and the Experience of Recent Disasters in Australia and New Zealand." *Gender, Place & Culture* 24, no. 1 (2017): 52-63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2016.1249352>.

McLennan, Molly. "From Victimization to Post-Structuralism: Understanding Changes in Historical Analysis of Gender in Aotearoa 1977 - 2008." *Historia!* 18 (2021): 37-42.

Middleton, Margaret. "The Queer-Inclusive Museum." *Journal Exhibition* 36, no. 2 (2017): 79-84.

Mills, Robert. "Theorizing the Queer Museum." *Museums & Social Issues* 3, no. 1 (2008): 41-52. <https://doi.org/10.1179/msi.2008.3.1.41>.

Murdoch, Craig. "Editorial: 'Be Better Than What's out There'." *Rangahau Aranga: AUT Graduate Review* 2, no. 2 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.24135/rangahau-aranga.v2i2.164>.

New Zealand AIDS Foundation. "'We Wear It to Protect Us All' Poster." Collection of Te Papa Tongarewa, Ref: GH025367. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2019. Wellington, NZ: Te Papa, 2016. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1717065>.

New Zealand AIDS Memorial Quilt Project. "New Zealand AIDS Memorial Quilt." 1988-present. a collaboratively produced memorial comprising panels by multiple makers. <https://aidsquilt.org.nz/>.

Nguyen, Tuan. "Mediating Queer Controversy in Australian Museum Exhibitions." Journal Article. *Historic Environment* 28, no. 3 (2016): 36-48. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.580974488056273>.

———. "Queering Australian Museums: Management, Collections, Exhibitions, and Connections." PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2018. <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/18169>.

- Nolan, Scott Ratima. “Kaitiakitanga: Utilising Māori Holistic Conservation in Heritage Institutions.” *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies* 20, no. 1 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.5334/jcms.215>.
- O’Malley, Vincent, and Joanna Kidman. “Settler Colonial History, Commemoration and White Backlash: Remembering the New Zealand Wars.” *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 3 (2018): 298-313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2017.1279831>.
- Packer, Jan. “Beyond Learning: Exploring Visitors’ Perceptions of the Value and Benefits of Museum Experiences.” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 51, no. 1 (2008): 33-54. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/j.2151-6952.2008.tb00293.x>.
- Packer, Jan, and Nigel Bond. “Museums as Restorative Environments.” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 53, no. 4 (2010): 421-36. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/j.2151-6952.2010.00044.x>.
- Phillips, Jock. *A History of New Zealand in 100 Objects*. New Zealand: Penguin Random House, 2022.
- Pilkington, Scott. “Communicating Science in Aotearoa New Zealand Museums: A Pop-up Medical Exhibition Case Study.” MA thesis, University of Auckland, 2020. <https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/54518>.
- . “Exhibition Review: *PUPURITIA: Storytelling and Contemporary Textiles*.” *Context Dress/fashion/textiles* 47 (2025): 89-92.
- . “Exhibition Review: *Wharenui Harikoa (House of Joy)* by Lissy Robinson-Cole and Rudi Robinson.” *Context Dress/fashion/textiles* 44 (2023).
- , “Staying Safe as a Researcher,” Anaise Irvine ed. *Thesislink. Graduate Research School, Auckland University of Technology*, 14 November, 2024, <https://thesislink.aut.ac.nz/?p=10650>.
- Pilkington, Scott, and Tof Eklund. “Can Universities Be Considered Queer Institutions?.” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025): 21-36. <https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.T2025040700002601059115633>.
- Puketapu-Hetet, Erenora. “A Cloak for the Sealord : Metal, Paua Shell Pieces and Feathers.” Paua shell, metal wire, and feather kākahu (cloak) in the collection of Veranoa Hetet. Wellington, NZ, 2002.
- Puketapu-Hetet, Erenora, Te Rangi Hetet, and Veranoa Hetet. “Cloak for the Sealord (Series Ii).” Metal wire and paua shell kākahu (cloak) by Erenora Puketapu-Hetet and mokopuna Te Rangi Hetet with tāniko by daughter Veranoa Hetet. Wellington, NZ, 2005.
- Reddy-Best, Kelly L., and Elaine L. Pedersen. “The Relationship of Gender Expression, Sexual Identity, Distress, Appearance, and Clothing Choices for Queer Women.” *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education* 8, no. 1 (2015): 54-65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17543266.2014.958576>.
- Riley, Caroline. “LGBTQ+ Representation in Museums.” MA thesis, Purchase College, 2020. <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12648/13122>.
- Robinson-Cole, Lissy, and Rudi Robinson-Cole. “Wharenui Harikoa (House of Joy).” Auckland, NZ: Lissy & Rudi, 2023.
- Ryan, J. Michael. “Queer Theory.” In *Companion to Sexuality Studies*, edited by Nancy A Naples, 79-94, 2020.
- Serrell, Beverly. “The Aggregation of Tracking-and-Timing Visitor-Use Data of Museum Exhibitions for Benchmarks of “Thorough Use.”” *Visitor Studies* 23, no. 1 (2020): 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10645578.2020.1750830>.
- . “Are They Watching? Visitors and Videos in Exhibitions.” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 45, no. 1 (2002): 50-64. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/j.2151-6952.2002.tb00049.x>.
- . “Paying Attention: The Duration and Allocation of Visitors’ Time in Museum Exhibitions.” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 40, no. 2 (1997): 108-25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2151-6952.1997.tb01292.x>.
- . *Paying Attention: Visitors and Museum Exhibitions*. Professional Practice Series. Edited by Roxana Adams. Washington DC: American Association of Museums, 1998.
- . “Paying More Attention to Paying Attention.” *Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education* (2010).
- . “The Question of Visitor Styles.” *Visitor Studies: Theory, research, and practice* (1996): 48-53.
- Sewell, Robert, Ti Lamusse, and Fiona Hutton. “Cisheteronormativity and the Court: A Queer Criminological Approach.” *New Zealand Sociology* 40, no. 1 (2025): 100-15.
- Smith, Avery, Hine Funaki, and Liana MacDonald. “Living, Breathing Settler-Colonialism: The Reification of Settler Norms in a Common University Space.” *Higher Education Research & Development* 40, no. 1 (2021): 132-45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1852190>.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies*. 2nd ed. Dunedin, NZ: Otago University Press, 2012.
- “Your Life Is Important – Your Archive Is Important.” Te Papa’s Blog, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2025, accessed 19 June, 2025, https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2025/06/19/your-life-is-important-your-archive-is-important/?mc_cid=38dac9386d&mc_eid=30792278af.
- Sullivan, Nikki, and Craig Middleton. “Queer/Ing Museological Technologies of Display.” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 4, no. 1 (2019): 59-70. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/qsmpe_00005_1.
- . “Warning! Heteronormativity: A Question of Ethics.” In *Museums, Sexuality, and Gender Activism*, edited by Joshua Adair and Amy K Levin. London, UK: Routledge, 2020.

- Sullivan, Nikki, Craig Middleton, Liz Grandmaison, and Millicent Wheeler. "Bi-Focals, Beards and Butches: Queering History in Museums." *History Australia* 19, no. 3 (2022): 561-74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14490854.2022.2054442>.
- Tangaere Baldwin, Melanie. *PUPURITIA: Storytelling and Contermporary Textiles, 5 April - 1 June [Exhibition Catalogue]*. Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, NZ: Objectspace, 2025.
- Thomsen, Patrick, and Phylesha Brown-Acton. "Manalagi Talanoa a Community-Centred Approach to Research on the Health and Wellbeing of Pacific Rainbow Lgbtiqa+ Mvypfaff Communities in Aotearoa New Zealand." *Pacific Health Dialog* 21, no. 7 (2021): 474-80.
- Tyrell, Pati Solomona. "Georgina Beyer." Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum PH-2018-3-1, 2019. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1030073>.
- Ville, Simon. "Researching the Natural History Trade of the Nineteenth Century." *Museum History Journal* 13, no. 1 (2020): 8-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19369816.2020.1760047>.
- Vo, Dan. "The Compassionate Way: Towards Trans and Non-Binary Inclusive Narratives in Museums." *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 14, no. 1-2 (2020): 95-101. <https://doi.org/10.23980/sqs.101457>.
- Walker, Arielle. "Mending the Kupenga: Towards a Language of Reciprocity between Ancestral Textile & Storytelling Practices." PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2024. <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/18330>.
- . "On Returning to the Sea: Towards Belonging through Land, Language, & Tactile Storytelling." MVA thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2020. <https://hdl.handle.net/10292/13696>.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. "Queer(Y)Ing the "Modern Homosexual"." *Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 3 (2012): 523-39. <https://doi.org/10.1086/664956>.
- Yunkaporta, Tyson. "Chapter 1: The Porcupine, the Paleo-Mind and the Grand Design." In *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World*. Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2018.

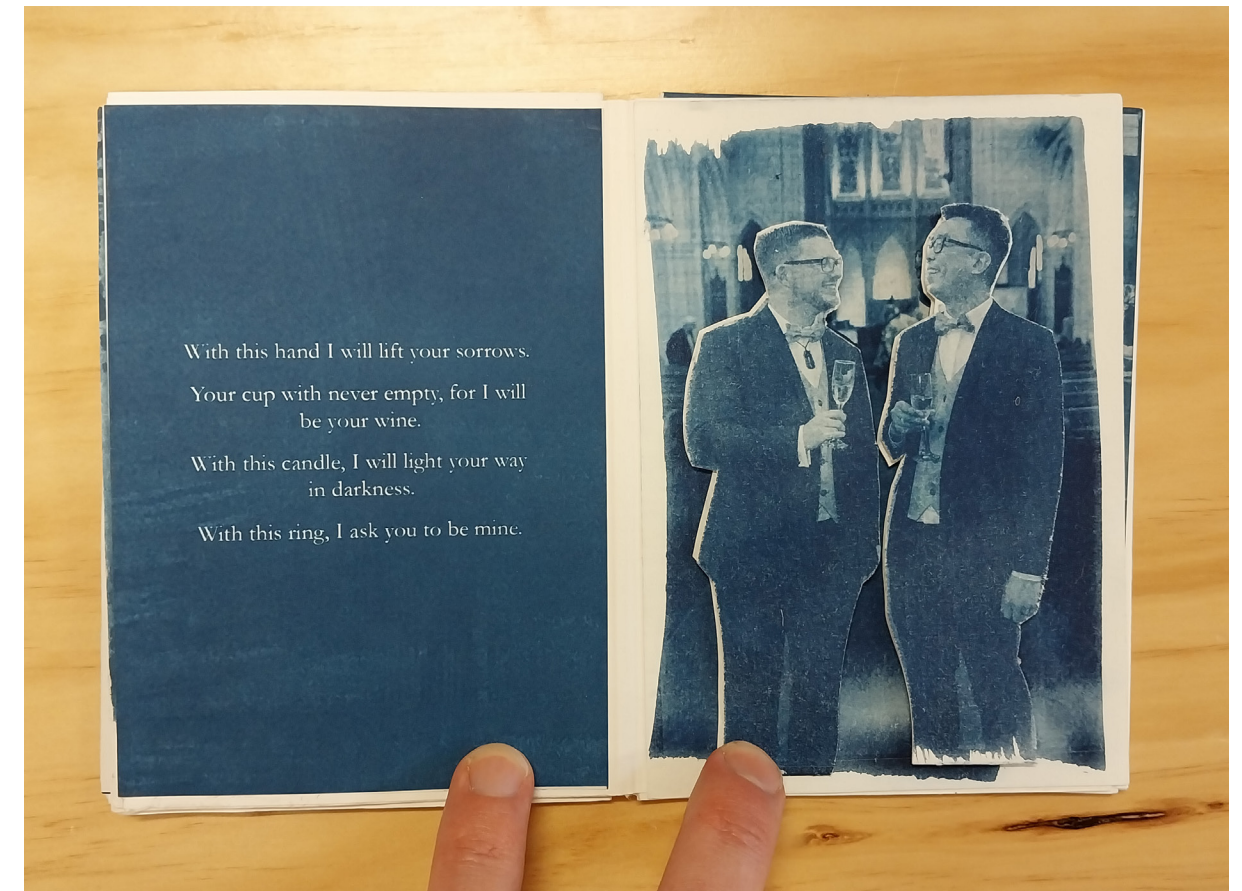


Figure 19: Cyanotype booklet (tunnel-book structure) depicting the author and his husband.

As a closing gesture, this artefact was produced during the coursework component of the MDes, and features my husband and I at our wedding. It takes the form of a cyanotype booklet, incorporating photographs from the day alongside a line from a poem read during the ceremony, and, on the facing page, our vows – adapted from *Corpse Bride* by Tim Burton and Mike Johnson.

At the time of its making, I had not yet begun to secure image reproduction permissions for the thesis and did not have access to suitable high-resolution material for testing. In response, I worked with the high-quality images available to me, drawing on photographs from our wedding to develop and refine these techniques.

Appendix 1: List of artefacts created



Krazy Knights v Rainbow Heroes autograph album

Autograph album documenting the inaugural Queer rugby game, containing photographs and handwritten signatures of players and supporters. Compiled by the artist using contemporary and archival material.



Military Leisure

Curated composite photo of military photographs from museum collections showing leisure scenes.

Female impersonators, Wally Pricor and P Jay. Department of Internal Affairs. War History Branch. Ref: PAColl-4161-01-205-08. Alexander Turnbull Library (/records/22859470).

Fort George 1902, Cameron Highlanders Camp. 'Sparkie' on bike. Te Papa (O.040426)

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. 1942. 2 female impersonators. Auckland Museum (PH-2020-1-1-21-22).

'Krazy Knights v Rainbow Heroes' rugby ball, 1998, India, by Gilbert Rugby. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (GH025532)

Krazy Knights rugby jersey, 1998, New Zealand, by Larsen. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Te Papa (GH018580)

Krazy Knights rugby team players, 25 October 1998, New Zealand, by Calvin Sankoli. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049078)

Krazy Knights and Ponsonby Heroes rugby teams at the end of play, 25 October 1998, New Zealand, by Calvin Sankoli. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049080)

Krazy Knights rugby team performing a haka, 25 October 1998, New Zealand, by Calvin Sankoli. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049079)

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. 1942. Kiwi Choir. Auckland Museum (PH-2020-1-1-21-7).

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. c.1943. Along the Waterfront Beyrut [Beirut]. Auckland Museum (PH-2020-1-2-24A-14).

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. c.1943. Group Picnic - Dancing. Auckland Museum (PH-2020-1-2-28A-16).

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. c.1943. Ration Store Cat. Auckland Museum (PH-2020-1-2-27A-22).

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. c.1943. Soldiers with Picnic Blanket, Egypt. Auckland Museum (2020-1-2-28A-3).

Maier, Heinrich. c.1915. Frank Perkins (Left) and Female Impersonator Stanley Lawson. Auckland Museum (PH-1993-110).

Rose, John (Maj). 1914. I wonder what the folks in New Zealand are doing just now? Gelibolu Yarimadasi. Te Papa (O.040609)

Rose, John (Maj). 1914. Lieutenant Nelson, NZAPC, and Lieutenant Ryan, APC. Mediterranean Sea. Te Papa (O.040534)

Rose, John (Maj). 1914. New Zealanders on the State Egyptian Railway. Te Papa (O.040437)

Krazy Knights rugby team, 1998, New Zealand, by Calvin Sankoli. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049076)

Krazy Knights and Ponsonby Heroes rugby teams in a scrum, 25 October 1998, New Zealand, by Calvin Sankoli. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049081)

Krazy Knights banner being painted, 1998, New Zealand, by Des Houlihan. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049075)

Krazy Knights rugby team, 1998, New Zealand, by Calvin Sankoli. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Te Papa (O.049077)

Rose, John (Maj). 1914. N. Z. Expeditionary Force, pillow fighting. Mediterranean Sea. Te Papa (O.040519)

Rose, John (Maj). 1914-1915. New Zealanders at the great Assuan Dam on the Nile. Te Papa (O.040433)

Sanders, Henry (Cpt). 1914-1918. Some New Zealand Officers. Auckland Museum (PH-ALB-418-p3-4).

Sanders, Henry (Cpt). 1917. Nurses of a New Zealand Hospital Give a Garden Party in the Grounds. Auckland Museum (PH-ALB-418)

Sanders, Henry (Cpt). 1917. NZ Officers Feeding the Swans. Auckland Museum (PH-ALB-418).

Sanders, Henry (Cpt). 1917. The Kiwis who for months have entertained the N.Z. soldiers fresh from the trenches in France. Auckland Museum (Ref: PH-ALB-418).

Sanders, Henry (Cpt). 1917. The Search. Auckland Museum (Ref: PH-ALB-418).

Soldiers riding camels at Giza. c.1916. Auckland Museum (PH-2001-2008-2001)



The Creation of Golden Goddess

Booklet highlighting and celebrating Edward Cowley's *Golden Goddess* costume. Includes a QR code to a video interview with Cowley about Staircase Bar.

Edward Cowley (2003). *Golden Goddess*. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. 2019.5.1.



Louisa Wall's jacket

Booklet highlighting and celebrating the jacket made for Louisa Wall for the passing of the Marriage Equality bill. Includes a QR code to a video capturing the moment it passed.

Violet MacKenzie, Louisa Wall. Jacket (c.2013). Auckland Museum (2018.43.1).



At least here we can be community[4 parts]

Flyers discussing ways that community could be built when Queer life was necessarily underground, through activities like phone tree networks and cruising sites.

Auckland City Council (1900-1999). Durham St West toilet door. Auckland Museum (2021.22.1).

Beattie, Bill. 1953. Wellesley telephone exchange. Auckland Museum (PH-NEG-NZH-H1594).

Telephone, c.1970, New Zealand, maker unknown. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Te Papa (GH012118).

"Telephone Booth." MOTAT.



Bookmark (1986-2026: 40 Years of Homosexual Law Reform)

Letterpress bookmark with split fountain ink to help situate & celebrate the anniversary.

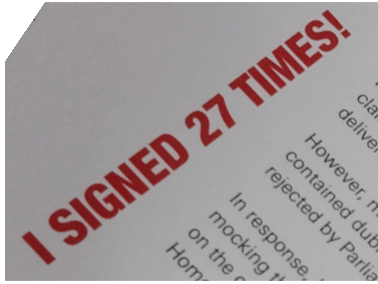


Capital's Devotion Parade a Colourful Celebration

Speculative newspaper article created to accompany a photo of Johnny Croskery and Fran Wilde at the Devotion (Pride) Parade in Wellington, reimagining contemporary media framing. Reverse: speculative newspaper composite page created from regional newspapers from the same time.

Johnny Croskery and Fran Wilde. From Johnny Croskery's photograph album 1980s - 1990s, 1995, New Zealand, maker unknown. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (O.044300)

Ruapehu Media Ltd. "*Ruapehu Bulletin* (Selected Pages, February 1995)." Newspaper page reproduced from Papers Past, National Library of New Zealand.



I Signed 27 Times!

Letterpress & digital print postcard based on a placard used during Homosexual Law Reform activism in September 1985.

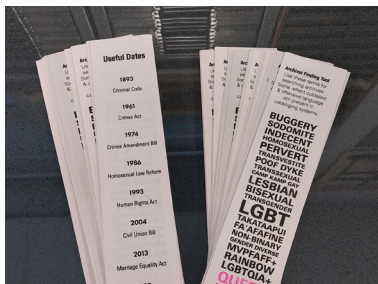
'I signed 27 times' placard, September 1985, New Zealand, by Hugh Young. Gift of Hugh Young, 2016. Te Papa (GH024821)



A Different kind of Teddy Bears' picnic

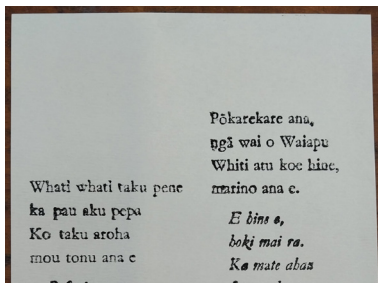
Letterpress & digital print postcard featuring protest lyrics inspired set to the tune of *A Teddy Bear's Picnic* with a toy teddy bear on the reverse.

Unknown manufacturer (c.1910). Toy, teddy. Auckland Museum (Col.3355).



Bookmark (Archival Finding Tool)

Risograph print bookmark doubling as a finding tool; featuring key terms and dates needed to successfully navigate archives for Queer materials.



Pōkarekare Ana

Letterpress print postcard with the lyrics of the great love song *Pōkarekare Ana*, which relates to the stories of two taonga referenced in the exhibition.

Letterpress print postcard with the lyrics of the great love song *Pōkarekare Ana*, which relates to the stories of two taonga referenced in the exhibition.



Lesbian Safe Sex kit [replica]

Recreation of a lesbian safe sex kit produced by the New Zealand AIDS Foundation in the early 2000s.

Lesbian safe sex kit, 'NZAF Prevention', Early 2000s, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Gift of Dame Margaret Sparrow, 2011. Te Papa (GH023699)



Rugby World Cup 2011 poi [intervention]

Mixed media installation combining printed imagery with poi, celebrating the impact of the successful women's rugby team.

Poi, Rugby World Cup 2021, 2022, New Zealand, maker unknown. Gift of Grace Hutton, 2023. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (GH026457/1-2)



This Object Has Been Removed from Display

Display intervention comprising a storage box made for a taonga Māori not present with accompanying collection photos.

Martin, Josiah. Display of Auckland Museum Institute collections Auckland Museum (PH-1958-1-15409).



Four Men in Bunny's Bush [reproduction]

Domestic framed digital reproduction print of a group of male friends (and dog) enjoying each other's companionship and leisure in Masterton.

Gant, Robert. "Four Men in Bunny's Bush. Photograph Albums. Ref: Pa1-Q-962-54-4." Wellington, NZ: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1880s.



Two Women [reproduction]

Domestic framed digital reproduction print of two unnamed women showing a scene of female companionship.

Two women. Eastcott, H R: Collection of negatives and prints. Ref: 1/2-094740-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. / records/22311662



Maoritanga [reproduction]

Domestic framed digital reproduction of a portrait of Carmen Rupe hosting in the 1970s.

Maoritanga - Scenes from Maori Life, Carmen, 1970s, Wellington, by Ans Westra, courtesy of Suite Tirohanga. Purchased 1993 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds. Te Papa (O.016233)



Chrissy Witoko at the Evergreen [reproduction]

Domestic framed digital reproduction of a portrait of Chrissy Witoko at her late night coffee bar The Evergreen Club.

Chrissy Witoko at The Evergreen Club, Wellington, 1989, Auckland, by Fiona Clark. Te Papa (O.043778)



Flint Island Expedition [reproduction]

Domestic framed digital reproduction print of friends & colleagues heading to Flint Island to record an astronomical observation.

Winkelmann, Henry. "Flint Island Expedition. H. Winkelmann in Ventilator. S.S. Taviuni. 1907." Auckland Museum (PH-NEG-3099).



Squadron Leader Rebecca 'George' Magdalinos [reproduction]

Domestic framed digital reproduction print of a portrait of George Magdalinos with her whānau, part of a collection of Rainbow Defence Force members.

Flatt, Russ. "Squadron Leader Rebecca 'George' Magdalinos." Part of the 'Rainbow Warriors' series. Auckland Museum (PH-2022-1-14).



Pocket Print: Swapping Spit

Digital reproduction print showing a private Queer scene that has been carried loose and has the patina of daily wear.

Henry Winkelmann (Circa 1900). Swapping Spit. Auckland Museum (PH-1971-6-1).



Pocket Print: Three Men Sitting in a Room

Digital reproduction print showing a scene showing male intimacy that has been carried loose and has the patina of daily wear.

Gant, Robert. "Three Men in a Sitting Room. Photograph Albums. Ref: Pa1-Q-962-05-4. /Records/23105652." Wellington, NZ: Alexander Turnbull Library, c.1887-1889.



Aorere Cabin Interior [reproduction]

Digital reproduction print of a scene showing male companionship, displayed in a museum-grade storage envelope. Two of the faces have been cut out & are displayed in matching lockets with different levels of patina.

Winkelmann, Henry. "Aorere - Interior of Cabin." Glass/inorganic plate. Collection of Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland Museum, Ref: PH-NEG-8083.



Dorian Society Ball [reproduction]

Digital reproduction print showing, displayed in a museum-grade storage envelope. The Dorian Society was one of the first Queer Rights organisations.

Dorian Society annual ball (1967) in the Brooklyn Community Hall, Wellington., 1967, Wellington, maker unknown. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (O.044386)



Drag Performer [reproduction]

Digital reproduction print showing a drag performer, displayed in a museum-grade storage envelope.

Drag performer. From Johnny Croskery's photograph album 1960-1980, 1960-1980, New Zealand, maker unknown. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (O.044362)



Scene at Te Aro Baths [reproduction]

Digital reproduction print showing Te Aro Baths (swimming pool), a renowned cruising spot during a time when Queer life was criminalised.

Scene at Te Aro Baths, Wellington. Evening post (Newspaper. 1865-2002): Wellington, NZ: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1950.



Chrissy Witoko's tiara [photograph reproduction]

Digital reproduction print showing Chrissy Witoko's tiara, presented on a display stand.

Tiara, maker unknown. Gift of the Witoko family in memory of Chrissy Witoko, 2012. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Te Papa (GH015994)



Summer Morning / Men Bathing in the River [reproduction]

Digital reproduction print showing men cavorting. Knowing the photographer, there is probably more than meets the eye.

Gant, Robert. "Summer Morning / Men Bathing in a River. Photograph Albums. Ref: Pa1-Q-962-38-1." Wellington, NZ: Alexander Turnbull Library, c.1887-1889.



I Signed 27 Times [reproduction]

Recreated 1985 placard spoofing the Coalition of Concerned Citizens unsuccessful petition to government opposing Homosexual Law Reform.

'I signed 27 times' placard, September 1985, New Zealand, by Hugh Young. Gift of Hugh Young, 2016. Te Papa (GH024821)



Trans Rights Are Human Rights

Modern style placard made in the style of historical ones, to attempt to fill the absence of one in museum collections.



Death to Victorian Attitudes [recreation]

We are proud of our "perversion" | Gay Liberation [recreation]

10%+ of New Zealanders are Gay [recreation]

End fascist repression of people [recreation]

We VOTE too! Watch out marginal seats [recreation]

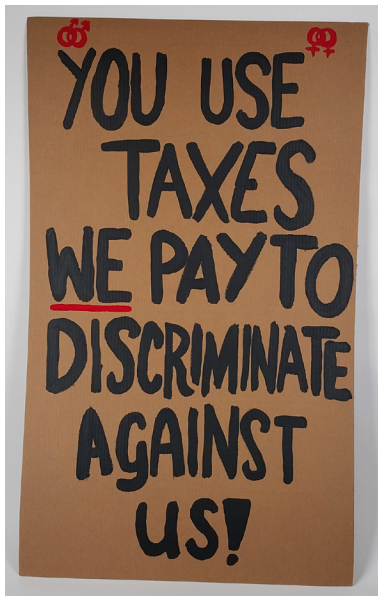
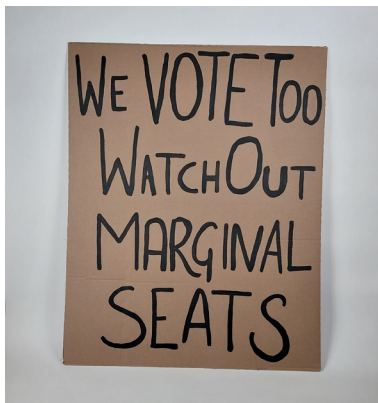
Hi Mum! [recreation]

You use taxes WE pay to discriminate against us! [recreation]

In societies where women are repressed, to be Lesbian is a sign of mental health [recreation]

Series of recreated placards based on a photograph of Queer Rights protestors outside parliament.

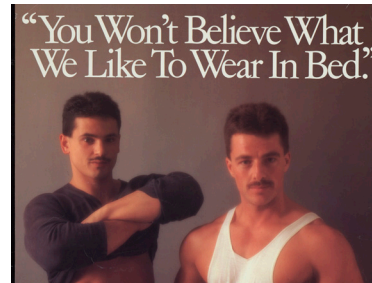
Gay Liberation Movement demonstrating, Parliament grounds, Wellington, New Zealand. Dominion Post (Newspaper): Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. / records/23041778



Ending HIV [in population] [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

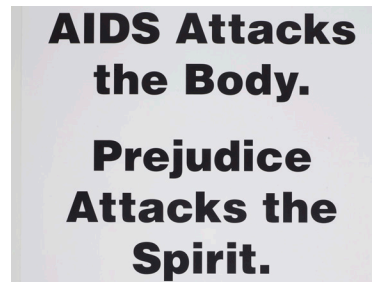
Ending HIV Poster in Population, 2020, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation, Russ Flatt. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Te Papa (GH025775)



You won't believe what we like to wear in bed [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

New Zealand AIDS Foundation. "Poster ["You Won't Believe What We Like to Wear in Bed"]." Wellington, NZ: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1988. Photograph. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22330145>.



AIDS & prejudice poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

AIDS poster, 1990, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Gift of New Zealand Aids Foundation, 2015. Te Papa (GH024591)



AIDS is about living [poster] [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

AIDS is about living poster, late 1980s, New Zealand, by Department of Health, Cliff Whiting ONZ. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Te Papa (GH025850)



Queens of the Pacific poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster targeting Pacific communities in Aotearoa.

Queens of the Pacific poster, late 1990s, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation, Arjan Hoeflak, Mariano Vivanco. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2019. Te Papa (GH025370)



Love Your Condom poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

Love Your Condom poster, 2012, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation, Samantha Asri. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Te Papa (GH025825)



Condoms. My Choice! Poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

Condoms. My Choice! poster, 2020, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Te Papa (GH025827)



PrEP. My Choice! Poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

PrEP. My Choice! poster, 2020, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Te Papa (GH025828)



I Always Come Prepared poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction public health campaign poster.

I Always Come Prepared poster, 2011, New Zealand, by New Zealand AIDS Foundation. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Te Papa (GH025804)



Trans People Have Always Existed poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction poster educating about Trans communities.

Trans People Have Always Existed poster, 2018, New Zealand, by Huriana Kopeke-Te Aho, Ahi Wi-Hongi, Gender Minorities Aotearoa. Purchased 2019. Te Papa (GH025384)



Indigenous Genders Are Real poster [reproduction]

Digital reproduction poster educating about Indigenous Genders.

Indigenous Genders are Real. 2018, New Zealand, by Huriana Kopeke-Te Aho, Ahi Wi-Hongi, Gender Minorities Aotearoa. Purchased 2019. Te Papa (GH025388)



Gay Men, Lesbians & Friends' poster

Risograph reproduction poster advertising a celebration party following passing of Homosexual Law Reform.

'Gay Men, Lesbians & Friends' poster, 1986, New Zealand, by Wellington Media Collective, Lee Jensen. Te Papa (GH024622)



Trevor Morley's helmet [crocheted recreation]

Crochet cover over a plastic helmet to recreate the helmet Trevor Morley wore when a vice squad detective, later gifted to Carmen Rupe.

Customised police helmet, 1970s - 2006, New Zealand, by Samantha Morley. Gift of Robin Waerea and Jurgen Hoffman on behalf of Carmen Tione Rupe, 2013. Te Papa (GH017761)



Camp Mother & Camp Leader sampled

Digitally embroidered sampler depicting paired knitted dolls representing Topp Twins' characters Camp Mother and Camp Leader.

'Camp Mother' knitted doll, circa 1999, New Zealand, maker unknown. Gift of Lynda and Jools Topp, 2000. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (GH007985)

'Camp Leader' knitted doll, circa 1999, New Zealand, maker unknown. Gift of Lynda and Jools Topp, 2000. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (GH007984)



Tea towel, 'World AIDS Day' (after original)

Screenprinted recreated tea towel advertising World AIDS Day. Originally for Australia, I have added an Aotearoa link.

Tea towel, 'World AIDS Day', 2010, China, by Latest & Greatest Collection. Gift of Gareth Watkins and Roger Smith, 2011. © The copyright holder. Te Papa (GH017314)



NZ Falcons rugby jersey [reproduction]

Digital print image transfer of a NZ Falcons rugby jersey. The Falcons are an Auckland-based gay rugby team.

New Zealand Falcons. "Rugby Shirt." Collection of Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, 2024.4.1. Gift of New Zealand Falcons. Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum, 2023.



Amazon Softball Club jersey [reproduction]

Digital print image transfer of a Amazon Softball Club jersey. The Amazons were a Wellington-based lesbian softball team.

Player's shirt, Amazon Softball Club uniform, Circa 2000, New Zealand, by Anna Louise Schoolwear. Gift of the Amazon Softball Club Inc., 2012. Te Papa (GH017600)



Krazy Knights rugby jersey [reproduction]

Digital print image transfer of a Krazy Knights rugby jersey. The Krazy Knights were a Wellington-based gay rugby team.

Krazy Knights rugby jersey, 1998, New Zealand, by Larsen. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Te Papa (GH018580)



Drodrolagi Movement t-shirt [reproduction]

Screenprinted reproduction of Drodrolagi Movement (droMo) protest shirt, a Queer Rights group in Fiji.

Tora, Luisa, and Molly Rangiwai-McHale. "Drodrolagi Movement T-Shirt (Maker's Title)." Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum, n.d. T-shirt.



Cook Islands Pride t-shirt [reproduction]

Screenprinted reproduction a Cook Islands Pride shirt, a Queer Rights group in the Cook Islands.

Te Tiare Association, and Ana File-Heather. "Pride Cook Islands T-Shirt." Collection of Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, 2023.11.1. Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum, 2021. T-shirt.



banner, women's march [reproduction]

Recreated textile banner made for the Women's March in Auckland in January 2017. It's message is intersectional.

Rachel Manning. Banner, Women's March (Jan 2017). Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. 2017.29.1.

YOUR HATRED IS TOTALLY INTOLERABLE

Your Hatred is Totally Intolerable

Large-scale textile banner featuring a quote attributed to Georgina Beyer. Based on a portrait by FAFSWAG founder Pati Solomona Tyrell.

Tyrell, Pati Solomona. "Georgina Beyer." Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum PH-2018-3-1, 2019.



Queer Rights are Human Rights (the next generation continues the fight)

Recreated textile banner based on a Homosexual Law Reform banner with an additional layer updating the message, showing the struggle continues.

The Pride Centre. Banner [GAY RIGHTS = HUMAN RIGHTS]. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. 2019.34.4.

Appendix 2: List of taonga referenced

Alexander Turnbull Library:

Evening Post. "Scene at Te Aro Baths, Wellington." Swimmers, changing sheds and harbour at Te Aro Baths in 1950 by an Evening Post photographer. Evening post (Newspaper. 1865-2002): Photographic negatives and prints of the Evening Post newspaper. Wellington, NZ: 1950. Dry plate glass negative. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22670317>.

Gant, Robert. "Four Men in Bunny's Bush. Photograph Albums. Ref: Pa1-Q-962-54-4." Four men in Bunny's Bush. Three are on a rustic seat and one is on the bank behind the seat. The four are framed by vegetation. Probably photographed by Robert Gant between 1887 and 89. Wellington, NZ: 1880s. Albumen print. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/23108315>.

———. "Summer Morning / Men Bathing in a River. Photograph Albums. Ref: Pa1-Q-962-38-1." Wellington, NZ: c.1887-1889. Albumen print, mounted on album page. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22411320>.

———. "Three Men in a Sitting Room. Photograph Albums. Ref: Pa1-Q-962-05-4. / Records/23105652." Wellington, NZ: c.1887-1889. Albumen print. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/23105652>.

"Gay Liberation Movement Demonstrating, Parliament Grounds, Wellington, New Zealand." Dominion Post (Newspaper): Photographic negatives and prints of the Evening Post and Dominion newspapers. Wellington, NZ: 1974. Silver gelatin print. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/23041778>.

New Zealand AIDS Foundation. "Poster ["You Won't Believe What We Like to Wear in Bed"]." Wellington, NZ: 1988. Photograph. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22330145>.

"Two Women." Eastcott, H R: Collection of negatives and prints. Wellington, NZ: [190-?]. Dry plate glass negative. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22311662>.

Unknown photographer. "Female Impersonators, Wally Pricor and P Jay." Department of Internal Affairs. War History Branch: Photographs relating to World War 1914-1918, World War 1939-1945, occupation of Japan, Korean War, and Malayan Emergency. Wellington, NZ: 1942. Silver gelatin print. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22859470>.

Auckland Museum:

Auckland City Council. "Durham St West Toilet Door." Ref: 2021.22.1. Gift of Shaun McGill. Auckland, NZ: 20th century. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/941070>.

Beattie, Bill. "Wellesley Telephone Exchange." New Zealand Herald collection, Ref: PH-NEG-NZH-H1594. Auckland, NZ: 1953. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1128607>.

Reproduction permissions were obtained from the relevant museums and, where required, from associated rights holders and community representatives, with approvals secured in accordance with institutional processes prior to image release.

Cowley, Edward. "Golden Goddess [Buckwheat Costume]." Ref: 2019.5.1. Auckland, NZ: 2003. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/872424>

Flatt, Russ. "Squadron Leader Rebecca 'George' Magdalinos." Ref: PH-2022-1-14. Auckland, NZ: 2019. Digital photograph. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1389745>.

Gilmour, Hugh Cowan. "2 Female Impersonators." Ref: PH-2020-1-1-21-22. Auckland, NZ: 1942. cellulose nitrate film. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1016629>.

———. "Along the Waterfront Beirut [Beirut]." Ref: PH-2020-1-2-24A-14, c.1943. Nitrate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1015727>.

———. "[Group Picnic - Dancing]." Ref: PH-2020-1-2-28A-16, c.1943. Nitrate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1015528>.

———. "Kiwi Choir." Ref: PH-2020-1-1-21-7, 1942. Nitrate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1016641>.

———. "Ration Store Cat." Ref: PH-2020-1-2-27A-22, c.1943. Nitrate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1015555>.

———. "[Soldiers with Picnic Blanket] [Egypt]." Ref: PH-2020-1-2-28A-3, c.1943. Nitrate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1015541>.

MacKenzie, Violet. "Jacket." Commissioned by Labour MP Louisa Wall (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Waikato). Ref: 2018.43.1. Auckland, NZ: c.2013. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/865057>

Maier, Heinrich. "Frank Perkins (Left) and Female Impersonator Stanley Lawson." Ref: PH-1993-110. Auckland, NZ: c.1915. Gelatine silver print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1065901>.

Manning, Rachel. "Banner, Women's March." Ref: 2017.29.1. Auckland, NZ, 2017. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/822777>

Martin, Josiah. "[Display of Auckland Museum Institute Collections]." Assemblage. Objects deposited by Capt. Gilbert Mair, Mr T Spencer and Mr E. S. Brookes. Image taken at the original Auckland Museum on Princes Street, Auckland. Auckland, NZ: Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. Gelatin dry plate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/1035760>.

New Zealand Falcons. "Rugby Shirt." Ref: 2024.4.1. Gift of New Zealand Falcons. Auckland, NZ: 2023. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1338724>.

Sanders, Henry (Cpt). "The Kiwis Who for Months Have Entertained the N.Z. Soldiers Fresh from the Trenches in France." Ref: PH-ALB-418. Auckland, NZ: 25 Aug 1917. Gelatin silver print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1062970>.

———. "Nurses of a New Zealand Hospital Give a Garden Party in the Grounds." Ref: PH-ALB-418, 1914-1918. Silver gelatin print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1062830>.

———. "NZ Officers Feeding the Swans." Ref: PH-ALB-418, 1917. Silver gelatin print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1062921>.

———. "The Search." Ref: PH-ALB-418, 1917. Silver gelatin print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1062776>.

———. "Some New Zealand Officers." Ref: PH-ALB-418-p3-4, 1914-1918. Silver gelatin print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1062756>.

Te Tiare Association, and Ana File-Heather. "Pride Cook Islands T Shirt." Ref: 2023.11.1. Auckland, NZ: 2021. T-shirt. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/943243>

The Pride Centre. "Banner." Reads "GAY RIGHTS = HUMAN RIGHTS" Ref: 2019.34.4. Auckland, NZ: 1985. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/874719>

Tora, Luisa, and Molly Rangiwai-McHale. "Drodrolagi Movement T-Shirt (Maker's Title)." Ref: 2019.35.5. Auckland, NZ: n.d.. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/875062>.

"Toy, Teddy." Col.3355. Ref: 1992.323. Auckland, NZ: Auckland Museum, c.1910. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/80359>

Tyrell, Pati Solomona. "Georgina Beyer." Ref: PH-2018-3-1. Auckland, NZ: 2019. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1030073>

Unknown photographer. "[Soldiers Riding Camels at Giza]." Ref: PH-2001-8-1, c.1916. Silver gelatin print. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1070700>.

Winkelmann, Henry. "Aorere - Interior of Cabin." Ref: PH-NEG-8083. Auckland, NZ: 04 Mar 1900. Gelatin dry plate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1090710>.

———. "Flint Island Expedition. H. Winkelmann in Ventilator. S.S. Taviuni. 1907." Ref: PH-NEG-3099. Auckland, NZ: 1907. Gelatin dry plate negative. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/1325024>.

———. "Swapping Spit." Ref: PH-1971-6-1. Auckland, NZ: c.1900. <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections/record/1096822>

Te Papa:

Ariki Arts, Ahi Wi-Hongi, and Gender Minorities Aotearoa. “Indigenous Genders Are Real Poster.” Ref: GH025388. Wellington, NZ: 2018. Poster. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1800519>.

“Camp Leader’ Knitted Doll.” Ref: GH007984. Gift of Lynda and Jools Topp, 2000, c.1999. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/487474>

“Camp Mother’ Knitted Doll.” Ref: GH007985. Gift of Lynda and Jools Topp, 2000., c.1999. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/487476>

Clark, Fiona. “Chrissy Witoko at the Evergreen Club, Wellington.” Ref: O.043778 . Wellington, NZ: 1989. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1516517>

Department of Health. “AIDS Is About Living [Poster].” Cliff Whiting ONZ, artist. Ref: GH025850. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Wellington, NZ: 1980s. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1963653>.

“Dorian Society Annual Ball (1967) in the Brooklyn Community Hall, Wellington.” Colour photograph from the Johnny Croskery photograph album 1960-80. Gift of Peter Kooiman, 2016. Ref O.044386, 1967. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1543774>

“Drag Performer.” Black and white print. From Johnny Croskery’s photograph album 1960-80. Gift of Peter Kooiman, 2016. Ref O.044362, c.1960-1980. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1543747>

Houlihan, Des. “Krazy Knights Banner Being Painted [by Calvin Sankoli].” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049075. New Zealand, 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848567>.

“Johnny Croskery and Fran Wilde.” From Johnny Croskery’s photograph album, 80s-90s. Collection of Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, Ref: O.044300. Gift of Peter Kooiman, 2016, 1995. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1543378>

Kopeke-Te Aho, Huriana, Ahi Wi-Hongi, and Gender Minorities Aotearoa. “Trans People Have Always Existed.” Ref: GH025384. Wellington, NZ: 2018. Poster. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1800522>.

“Krazy Knights Rugby Jersey.” Krazy Knights rugby jersey, New Zealand. Made by Larsen. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Ref: GH018580, 1998. Rugby jersey. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848373>.

“Krazy Knights V Rainbow Heroes’ Rugby Ball.” Ref: GH025532. Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020, 1998. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1777037>

Morley, Trevor WA. “Customised Police Helmet (Gift of Robin Waerea and Jurgen Hoffman on Behalf of Carmen Tione Rupe, 2013).” Ref: GH017761. Wellington, NZ: 1970s-2006. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1288653>.

New Zealand AIDS Foundation. “AIDS Poster.” AIDS poster [AIDS Attacks the Body. Prejudice Attacks the Spirit. One is caused by a virus. One is caused by ignorance. BOTH CAN KILL.] Ref GH024591. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2015. Wellington, NZ: 1990. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1500786>.

———. “Condoms. My Choice! Poster.” Ref: GH025827. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Wellington, NZ: 2020. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1963401>.

———. “Ending HIV Poster in Population.” Russ Flatt, photographer. Ref: GH025775. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2020. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1959091>

———. “I Always Come Prepared Poster.” Ref: GH025804. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Wellington, NZ: 2011. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1961228>.

———. “Lesbian Safe Sex Kit, ‘NZAF Prevention.’” Ref: GH023699. Gift of Dame Margaret Sparrow, 2011. Wellington, NZ: 2000s. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1344515>.

———. “Love Your Condom Poster.” Samantha Asri, illustrator. Ref: GH025825. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Wellington, NZ: 2012. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1963386>.

———. “PrEP. My Choice! Poster.” Ref: GH025828. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2021. Wellington, NZ: 2020. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1963405>.

———. “Queens of the Pacific Poster.” NZAF publisher; Arjan Hoeftak designer; Mariano Vivanco photographer. Ref: GH025370. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2019. Wellington, NZ: 1990s. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1719007>.

———. ““We Wear It to Protect Us All” Poster.” Ref: GH025367. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2019. Wellington, NZ: 2016. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1717065>.

———. ““What Do We Wear to Feel Invincible?” Poster.” Ref: GH025368. Gift of New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2019. Wellington, NZ: 2016. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1717144>.

“Player’s Shirt, Amazon Softball Club Uniform.” Ref: GH017600. Gift of the Amazon Softball Club Inc., 2012. Wellington, NZ: 2000. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1289739>.

“Poi, Rugby World Cup 2021.” Ref: GH026457/1-2. Gift of Grace Hutton, 2023. Wellington, NZ: 2021. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/2141686>.

Rose, John M (Maj). “Fort George 1902, Cameron Highlanders Camp. ‘Sparkie’ on Bike.”, Fort George, Scotland. From the album: Photograph album of Major J.M. Rose, 1st NZEF. Ref: O.040426, 1902. Silver gelatin print. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1389458>.

- . “I Wonder What the Folks in New Zealand Are Doing Just Now?” Gelibolu Yarimadasi, Türkiye. From the album: Photograph album of Major J.M. Rose, 1st NZEF. Ref: O.040609, 1915. Silver gelatin print. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1389641>.
- . “Lieutenant Nelson, NZAPC, and Lieutenant Ryan, APC.” Mediterranean Sea. From the album: Photograph album of Major J.M. Rose, 1st NZEF. Ref: O.040534, 1914-1916. Silver gelatin print. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1389566>.
- . “N. Z. Expeditionary Force, Pillow Fighting.” Mediterranean Sea. From the album: Photograph album of Major J.M. Rose, 1st NZEF. Ref: O.040519, 1914. Silver gelatin print. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1389551>.
- . “New Zealanders at the Great Assuan Dam on the Nile.” Aswan, Egypt. From the album: Photograph album of Major J.M. Rose, 1st NZEF. Ref: O.040433, 1914-1915. Silver gelatin print. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1389465>.
- . “New Zealanders on the State Egyptian Railway.” Egypt. From the album: Photograph album of Major J.M. Rose, 1st NZEF. Ref: O.040437, 1914-1915. Silver gelatin print. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1389469>.
- Sankoli, Calvin. “Krazy Knights and Ponsonby Heroes Rugby Teams at the End of Play.” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049080. New Zealand, 25 October 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848591>.
- . “Krazy Knights and Ponsonby Heroes Rugby Teams in a Scrum.” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049081. Wellington, 25 October 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848597>.
- . “Krazy Knights Rugby Team.” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049076. New Zealand, 25 October 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848562>.
- . “Krazy Knights Rugby Team.” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049077. New Zealand, 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848529>.
- . “Krazy Knights Rugby Team Performing a Haka.” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049079. New Zealand, 25 October 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848583>.
- . “Krazy Knights Rugby Team Players.” Gift of Alan Bracegirdle, 2020. Ref: O.049078. New Zealand, 25 October 1998. Photograph. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1848578>.
- “Tea Towel, ‘World AIDS Day.’” Ref: GH017314. Gift of Gareth Watkins and Roger Smith, 2011. Wellington, NZ: Te Papa, 2010. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1222895>.
- “Telephone.” Acquisition details/history unknown. Found in collection, 2009. Wellington, NZ: c.1970. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/953568>.

“Tiara.” Gift of the Witoko family in memory of Chrissy Witoko, 2012. Ref: GH015994. Wellington, NZ: Te Papa. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/792887>

Wellington Media Collective. “‘Gay Men, Lesbians & Friends’ Poster.” Ref: GH024622. Wellington, NZ, 1986. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1431601>.

Westra, Ans. “Maoritanga - Scenes from Maori Life, Carmen.” Ref: O.016233. Wellington, NZ: 1970s. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/413649>

Young, Hugh. “‘I Signed 27 Times’ Placard.” Ref: GH024821. Gift of Hugh Young, 2016. Wellington, NZ: 1985. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1524601>

Additional Materials:

Ruapehu Media Ltd. “*Ruapehu Bulletin* (Selected Pages, February 1995).” Newspaper page reproduced from Papers Past, National Library of New Zealand. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ruapehu-bulletin/1995/02/>.

“Telephone Booth.” Auckland, NZ: The Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT). <https://collection.motat.nz/objects/36686/telephone-booth>.

Appendix 3: Summary of taonga data

The following tables analyse the primary shortlist of 57 taonga selected for focused engagement and artefact development. A broader set of approximately 80 taonga informed contextual and supplementary material within the exhibition (e.g. additional photographic groupings) but are not included in this dataset.

Table 1: Distribution of selected taonga across thematic groupings and time periods

Period	Private life	Performance	Protest	Health	Queer space	Everyday visibility
pre-1840	2	0	0	0	0	0
1840-1900	2	0	0	0	0	1
1900-1945	4	4	0	0	0	0
1945-1970	0	2	0	1	1	0
1970-1986	0	1	4	2	3	0
1986-1999	0	1	2	4	0	4
2000-2013	0	1	1	4	0	1
2013-present	1	0	1	3	4	3

Table 2: Distribution of taonga by object type across thematic groupings

Taonga type	Private life	Performance	Protest	Health	Queer space	Everyday visibility
artefact	1	0	0	3	0	2
banner	0	0	3	0	0	0
clothing	0	1	1	0	4	3
photo	8	8	2	1	2	1
poster	0	0	1	9	1	1
structure	0	0	0	1	1	0
toy	0	0	1	0	0	2

Table 3: Institutional sources of taonga included in the project

Institution	Taonga
Auckland Museum	20
Alexander Turnbull Library	8
Museum of Transport & Technology	1
Te Papa	28

Table 4: Summary of artefact production methods

Production method		Total
Fibrecrafts		4
Handmaking		4
Large format printing		11
Letterpress printing		4
Painting		10
Photo print		19
	Album	2
	Booklet	2
	Framed	6
	Loose	5
	Mounted	4
Screen printing		5
Risograph printing		7

Appendix 4: Exhibition & Postscript



Figure 20: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.

This exegesis was submitted for examination in April 2026. The weeks that followed involved the final production, installation, examination, public exhibition, and deinstallation of the project. While the preceding chapters document the development of the research and creative work, they could not account for the realities of exhibiting, nor for the ways in which audiences, communities, and contemporary events shaped its reception.

The exhibition was held Wed 3–Sat 6 June 2026 at Te Wai Ngutu Kaka Gallery, AUT.

Exhibitions as Negotiated Spaces

During installation, the planned window display was relocated from a smaller window adjacent to the gallery to a larger, externally facing window in another building. The revised location sat on a prominent corner overlooking a major route through the university, significantly increasing the visibility of the work.



Figure 21: Window display at night. Photograph: Paul Chapman.

The eleven artefacts displayed in this space became highly visible to passers-by and functioned as a sustained point of public engagement throughout installation. Unlike the main gallery, which was open for approximately three and a half days, the window display was active continuously and extended the reach of the exhibition beyond opening hours.

The change also shifted the tone of the work. In the window, the arrangement became more structured and aligned with conventional museum display practices. This created a contrast with the gallery installation, which retained a more fragmented



Figure 22: Window display at night. Photograph: Paul Chapman.

and non-linear approach. The transition between these two spaces produced an unplanned but welcome tension between institutional display conventions and Queer curatorial strategies.

The relocation also exposed practical limitations. Visitors sometimes followed the window display into an adjacent exhibition, assuming it formed part of the same project, suggesting that clearer spatial framing would have been useful.

Figure 23: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.



Exhibitions as Encounters

The exhibition demonstrated that meaning was produced through encounters with visitors, not only through design decisions. During the first evening of installation, members of the public engaged with the window display before the exhibition had officially opened. Their responses showed that several interpretive assumptions were not immediately legible. While visitors responded to the political tone of the work, they did not recognise the artefacts as reproductions of museum-held taonga, and one banner reproducing the words of Georgina Beyer was interpreted as a direct address rather than a quotation.

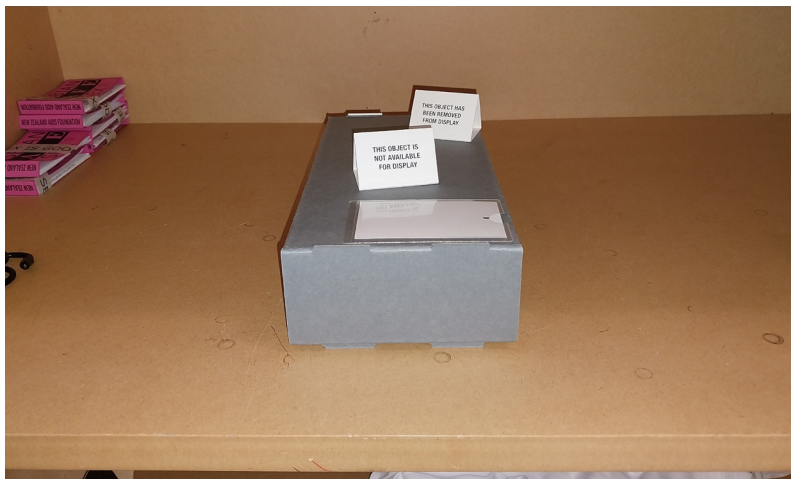


Figure 24: *Updated artefact: This object is not available for display. (June 2026).*

These observations prompted the introduction of interpretive material and the renaming of one display element to make these relationships clearer. The exhibition therefore functioned as an active research site, where audience interpretation directly shaped curatorial decisions.

Engagement with community representatives in the week prior to installation also prompted the revision of one artefact incorporating ancestral narratives. Rather than proceeding with the planned reference in the absence of clear support, the work was reconfigured to emphasise absence and institutional inaccessibility, reinforcing a broader concern with fragmented archival presence.

The exhibition was also shaped by events outside the gallery. The death of Dame Jools Topp DNZM during installation, and ongoing political efforts to restrict or erase trans and gender-diverse lives, intensified the contemporary relevance of the work. Although the research predated some of these events, the exhibition entered a context in which questions of visibility and representation were particularly urgent.



Figure 25: *Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.*

One visitor recognised family members depicted in a reproduced poster and shared memories of their participation in the 1990 Vancouver Gay Games.⁴⁸ This encounter demonstrated how historical material can activate personal memory and allow visitors to contribute lived experience to the exhibition.



Figure 26: Lisa Jurakovich with You Won't Believe What We Wear to Bed poster. June 2026.

⁴⁸ The visitor, Lisa Jurakovich, explained that she had not seen the image of her brother-in-law (Raymond van den Heuvel) and his partner (Neil Trubhovich, who died in 1993 from AIDS-related complications) for many years. The poster prompted recollections of their involvement in aerobics culture in the late 1980s, their participation in the 1990 Vancouver Gay Games, and Raymond's role in introducing her to her husband. She described being "chuffed" to see them represented in a public context and spent time sharing the posters with others in the gallery while recounting aspects of their lives. This encounter demonstrated how archival images operate not only as representations of historical events, but as relational objects through which memory is reactivated, re-narrated, and shared across time.



Figure 27: Exhibition detail including You Won't Believe What We Wear to Bed poster.

A planned community activation involving *Elder Queens Give Advice* ultimately did not proceed. This highlighted the difficulty of sustaining community participation outside established structures and events, and showed that engagement depends on timing, relationships, and organisational capacity rather than curatorial intention alone.



Figure 28: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.

Exhibitions as Temporary

The rapid deinstallation of the exhibition reinforced an observation from the contextual research: to be adaptive, Queer visibility in museum and gallery contexts is often temporary, emerging through short-term exhibitions, festival programming, and interpretive interventions.⁴⁹ Examples of this are visible across Aotearoa cultural institutions, and are listed on the next page. While such strategies enable visibility within otherwise constrained institutional contexts, they also foreground the ephemerality of that presence, a condition that became materially apparent in the immediate absence of the exhibition following deinstallation.



Figure 29: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.

⁴⁹ Armstrong, "Towards queer tours in science and technology museums"; Juvonen, Tuula. 2020. "Queer as a Queer Guided Tour." *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 14 (1-2); Nguyen, "Queering Australian Museums: Management, Collections, Exhibitions, and Connections."; Steorn, Patrik. 2012. "Curating Queer Heritage: Queer Knowledge and Museum Practice." *Curator: The Museum Journal* 55 (3): 355-365; Vo, Dan. 2020. "The Compassionate Way: Towards Trans and Non-Binary Inclusive Narratives in Museums." *SQS – Journal of Queer Studies in Finland* 14 (1-2).

Standing in the empty gallery immediately after deinstallation, the absence of the work made this condition tangible. Yet the conclusion of the exhibition also revealed another reality. While exhibitions are temporary, the communities formed around them are not. Conversations continued beyond the gallery, relationships persisted, and the work generated ongoing engagement.

Following deinstallation, fellow students and I shared kai, inu, kōrero, and time together in a practice of mutual care and collective reflection.

This reinforced that Queer histories are sustained not only through objects or exhibitions, but through ongoing acts of community, memory, and relationship.



Figure 30: Empty gallery, 6 June 2026.



Figure 31: MDes 2026 class building community, June 2026.

The exegesis documents the development of this project as research. The exhibition demonstrated that research continues beyond submission and beyond display. Meaning emerged through adaptation, encounter, and response, showing exhibition-making not only as a method of communication, but as a form of knowledge production. ♀



Figure 32: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Paul Chapman.

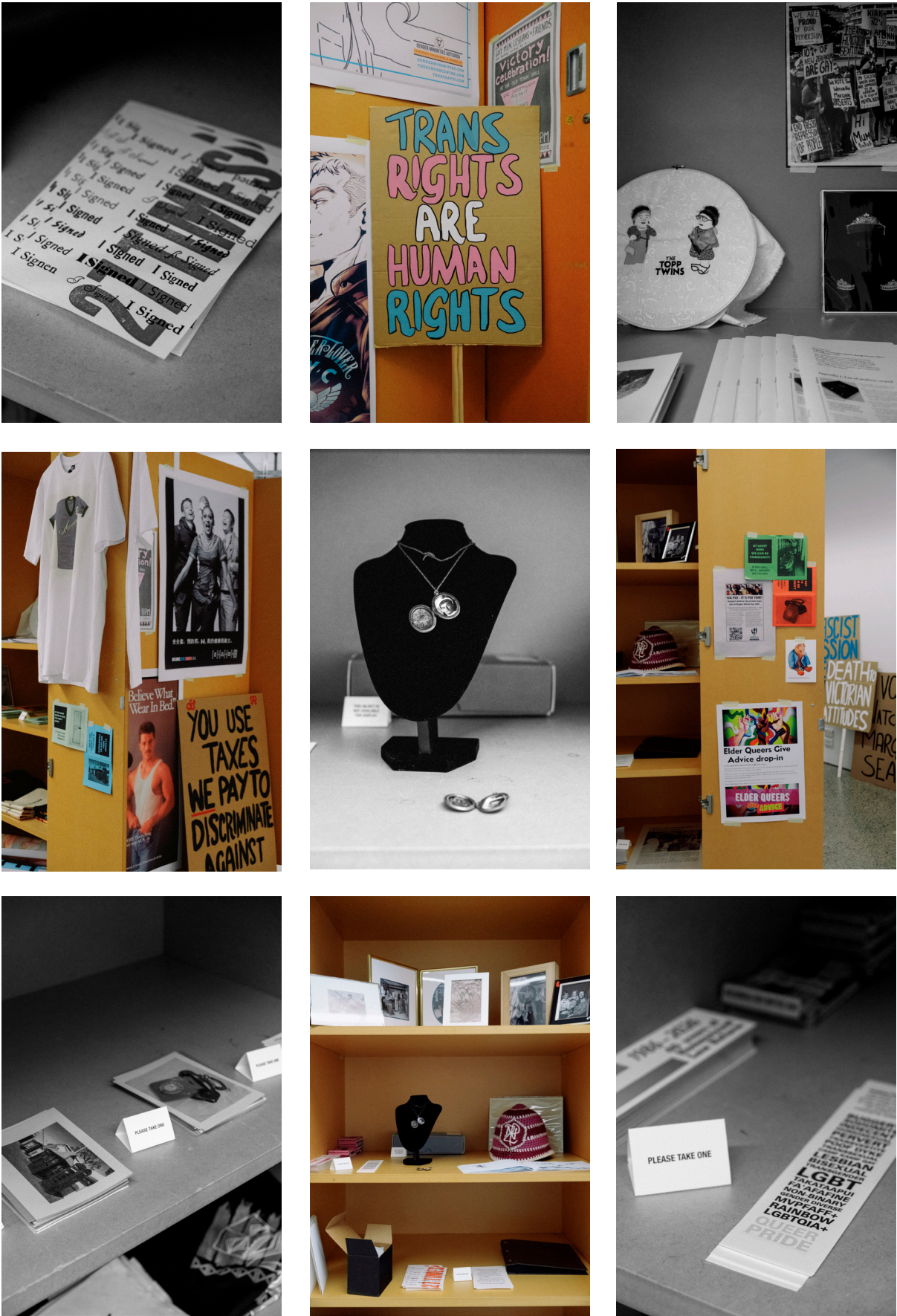


Figure 33: Exhibition detail. Photograph: Kayla Williams.

Figure 34: Author & exhibition. Photograph: Kayla Williams.

